

# ALAN FITZ-OSBORNE,

A N

## HISTORICAL TALE.

---

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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By MISS FULLER.

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Discord! dire Sister of the slaught'ring Pow'r,  
Small at her Birth, but rising ev'ry Hour,  
While scarce the Skies her horrid Head can bound  
She stalks on Earth, and shakes the World around;  
The Nations bleed, where'er her Steps she turns;  
The Groan still deepens, and the Combat burns.

POPE'S ILIAD.

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SECOND EDITION.

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L O N D O N:

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MDCCLXXXVII.







# ERRATA.

## VOL. I.

- Page 1. line 3. in the dedication for *now*, read *now*.  
 5. last line, for *correction*, read *correctness*.  
 91. 24. *sbethout*, *witbout*.  
 178. 4. *jetty*, *aubourn*.  
 184. 19. add a *semicolon*.

## VOL. II.

- Page 4. line 10. for *amulent*, read *amulet*.  
 21. 16. *Glencair* *Glencairn*.  
 30. 13. *dele and*.  
 33. 11. *fancien* *fancied*.  
 23. *help*, *beld*.  
 36. 1. *aloud*, *cloud*.  
 30. 8. *enarmoured*, *enamoured*.  
 64. 16. *fecity*, *felicity*.  
 68. 2. *ok*, *took*.  
 69. 19. *enarmoured* *enamoured*.  
 103. 1. *ym* *my*.  
 140. 14. *Elonora*, *Eleanora*.  
 145. 15. *n*. *in*.  
 232. 17. *Moslem*, *Mussulman*.  
 293. 1. *commnader*, *commander*.



TO  
MRS. NEWENHAM,  
OF MARYBOROUGH.

MADAM,

WHEN I first thought of writing the trifling production, which I now lay at your feet, many reasons concurred to perplex and prevent my design: I will take the liberty, Madam, to request your attention, while I repeat a soliloquy which this embarrassment gave rise to. If, said I, (which is a moot point) if I should be able to unite in my work the fertility of invention, with the correction

#### iv DEDICATION.

tion of judgment, still may the obscurity of the author cast such a shade on the production, as all the brilliancy of genius may not be sufficient to dissipate: it is therefore necessary that I choose a *patron* for this child of my brain; whose confessed benevolence of heart, elegance of taste, and superiority of understanding, shall, render the darts of malignant criticism pointless, excite the love of the virtuous, the admiration of the wise, and the astonishment of the ignorant. Is such a person to be found? The question staggered me.—And if found, said I again, while I speak only the sentiments of my heart, may not the many-headed *blatant monster* give to the dictates of truth the appellation of flattery?

I CON-



# DEDICATION. V

I CONSIDERED once more; the name of NEWENHAM rushed upon my memory, and doubt was at an end.—Here, said I, exaggeration cannot mingle with praise or censure await encomium.

SATISFIED on this head, I devote to you, Madam, a production, which however insignificant in itself, will borrow a value from its protectress.

I WILL now suppose myself in the situation of a person who, being possessed of a statue, wrought by the masterly chisel of a Phidias or Praxiteles, induced by an absurd and mistaken taste, fancies he can render its beauties more obvious and more exquisite, by the lively varnish of a pencil.—I suppose myself in his



vi D E D I C A T I O N.

situation, Madam, but I will avoid his error and not vainly imagine that what is in the aggregate so perfect, can need a more glaring illustration.

I AM, Madam, with the highest respect and esteem,

your most devoted,

and most obliged

humble servant,

ANNE FULLER.

P R E-

## P R E F A C E.

**P**REFATORY discourses, whether well or ill composed, are generally disregarded, when affixed to a work whose origin is fiction, and whose purpose entertainment. They are in truth rather a tribute to the author's self-love, than a deprecation of the reader's censures or criticism. Pardon me, my brethren of the quill, if I, though a novice in your profession, presume to unfold its mysteries to the public scrutiny. Yes, my dear associates, ye may be offended, but ye cannot justly deny that all writers, (from the sublime fashioner of an epic poem, to the Grub-street chronicler of a bloody murder) feel a natural tendency to extol their own talents, and to decry the wit of their competitors.

Now, as neither egotism nor envy can with propriety find place in the body of a production which treats of imaginary personages, what remains to the hard driven vanity of the poor author, but the secure shelter of a preface where he may blazon his own merits with impunity; and gratify his propensity to satire (if he really has any) by couching keen inuendo's under the agreeable dress of smooth and well turned periods.

PERHAPS, reader, thou dost expect that having thus argued against prefaces, I will now lay down my pen and prove my principles by my practice: if such are thy thoughts, the measure of thy simplicity exceeds that of thy knowledge. But if thou art wise, and hast read the volume of experience, thou wilt not wonder at a proceeding seemingly contradictory, yet highly natural: for is it not a fact, that we are accustomed to condemn in others what we imagine allowable in ourselves?



ourselves? Reader, whether thou art of this stamp or the former, I will make no more excuses; they lead to trite observations which I hate, and which I fancy thou wilt not approve. Forget then the past, and awake thy attention to the present; I am going to commence my preface;—behold!—

I SWEAR!—not on the faith of a Catholic Christian, like the sage Cid Hamet Ben Engeli, but by the nine inspired sisters, and their coadjutors; videlicet, the fount of Aganippe, and the hoof of Pegasus, that I mean not to offend the majesty of sacred truth, by giving her but a secondary place in the following pages. Necessity stronger than prudence, obliges me to give fiction the pre-eminence; but I beseech the before-named excellent person to observe, that this advantage is but apparent, and that the laboured ornaments of her competitor serve but as foils to enhance the lustre of her own unvar-

nished and transcendant graces. I will remind her too, that I have preserved her genuine purity as unblemished as circumstances would admit, and I trust she will accept an apology inspired by herself.

SUCH, reader, is my preface.—If thou dost not allow it to be as much to the purpose as any written by my contemporaries, I must bid thee farewell in the words of the Archbishop of Granada to his quondam Secretary \*.

\* Gil Blas.

ALAN

# ALAN FITZ-OSBORNE,

A N

## HISTORICAL TALE.

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### BOOK THE FIRST.

**A**MONGST the nobles who added splendour to the court of England in the reign of the Third Henry, Alan, Earl of Fitz-Osborne, shone foremost in power, and in fame. In his earliest youth he had joined those barons who so bravely withstood the arbitrary designs of the inglorious John; and scarce had the dawn of manhood dawned upon his cheek, when he gave most distinguishing tokens of a valour that still continued to ripen with his years. Yet his courage had nothing



thing in it ferocious, nor ever had his sword been drawn in the cause of injustice or oppression. Spirited to the proud, and gracious to the humble, he exacted respect from the first, and obtained affection from the last. Yet had his temper a fault, though it arose from a virtue: warm, impetuous and unsuspecting, he too readily gave ear to the suggestions of those in whom he placed his confidence, nor could his eye ever discover a blemish where he had fixed his heart.

Unhappily, the person, to whom the ties of blood and affection had riveted him most nearly, was of all others, least deserving his favour. Haughty, yet mean; avaricious, yet profuse; stern and severe to his dependants, and a sycophant to his superiors; such was Walter Fitz-Osborne, the brother of Alan. By a pre-eminence in courtly arts, he had successively arisen, from places of less importance, to one of immediate trust about the person of the king. Henry, untaught  
by

by the misfortunes of his father, or the common experience of mankind, generally chose his favorites amongst those, who could best soothe his weakness with adulation, and feed his suspicions with calumny; he singled Walter Fitz Osborne from this worthless herd; and loaded him with honours, and with wealth.

Alan had now arrived at that period of life, when the fiery ardour of youth is moderated by the curb of discretion.—His family called upon him to perpetuate a name, which he had brought to its meridian of glory; and Matilda, the heiress of De Burgh, became the object of his hopes and of his wishes. Heaven had endowed her with a form that surpassed the fairest, and a mind that even excelled it: a virtue that rendered pride laudable, and a pride that dignified virtue. She had listened to the praise of Fitz Osborne, with a greedy ear, and her attention was succeeded by love.—He wooed; his suit was crowned, was crown-  
ed

ed with success; Henry himself presided at their nuptials, and the spousal feast was lengthened to many days, and solemnized with courtly pomp and gallant spectacles.—That period over, Fitz-Osborne carried his beauteous Countess to a castle in the north of England, the gift of the conqueror to his brave progenitors.—Here the fair Matilda reigned supreme in the bosom of her beloved Lord, and her gentle virtues securely attached the hearts of his numerous vassals.—A lovely pledge of their tenderness soon beheld the light, and riveted the bands of conjugal affection more closely.—The mild graces of Matilda, and the manly beauties of Fitz-Osborne, already dawned in young Alan's features; he was committed to the care of Alice, a faithful dependant, and nurtured under his parent's eye. But two summers had rolled over his head, when Waltar Fitz-Osborne returned from an embassy with which Henry had intrusted him: he visited the Castle  
of



of Fitz-Osborne ; beheld Matilda—and burned with unlawful love.

The unsuspecting Earl received his brother with every demonstration of kindness and joy ; his arrival was the signal of pleasure ; the castle resounded with the noise of mirth and minstrelsy ; and the Countess exhausted invention itself, to furnish entertainments for this viper of her peace.

Incapable of gratitude, and unmoved by fraternal tenderness, the soul of Walter felt alone the dire sensations of envy, hatred, and illicit love. “What !” said he to himself, while the gloom of malice lowered upon his brow, “shall the same passion that consumes me, add to the felicity of Alan ?—Why was not I the elder ?—then should this minion of nature and of fortune have felt the sting of dependence !—then should I have been lord of these vast domains, and master of Matilda !” Yet notwithstanding this tumult in the bosom of Walter, his countenance  
pre-

preserved, in the presence of Fitz-Ofborne and the Countess, an appearance of smooth and unruffled tranquility. Often would he take young Alan in his arms, or dandle him on his knee ; and while the glance of dissembled pleasure shot from his eye, and the hollow smile of deceit sat upon his lips, press him to his breast, with all the seeming fervour of affection.

Two months had elapsed in this course of fraud, and the master-stroke was yet to play. He pretended a sudden mandate from Henry, and hastened to court. The king spoke of Fitz-Ofborne. Walter looked displeased. " Is not the Earl happy ?—asked Henry. " Too happy, my liege, for his duty and his glory : sunk in the lap of indolence he forgets that he has a king to serve, or a faith to defend. Now when infidels insult the holy city, when the banner of the red cross waves proudly throughout Christendom, my brother—heir of the honours  
and

and the house of Fitz-Osborne—O shame!—unmindful of his former glory, wastes the prime of his days in idle blandishments, and luxurious ease!” “He shall not”—said Henry, “we will give him the command of a chosen body of troops, and he shall join the banner of the red cross. Do thou bear our mandate to him, it will arouse his sleeping spirit.”—“And me,”—said Walter, assuming an air of concern, “he shall reap the laurels of war; and my name shall be sunk in oblivion.”—“Not so,” replied the King, “thy counsels are the support of my throne, and the favour of thy sovereign is the best fame.”—Walter bowed, and retired from his presence. He then sought the Lord of Arundel, and bade him accompany him to the dwelling of Fitz-Osborne.—This young noble was one of those summer flies, who so often infest the walls of palaces. Dainty, tripping, affected, delicate in form, and im-  
potent



potent of soul.—Him did Walter choose as an instrument of his own base purpose.

They reached the castle, and a scene of festivity and of pleasure ensued. The lovely Matilda presided at the board, and Alice, with young Alan in her arms stood at some distance. The sparkling goblet went round. The minstrels touched their harps, and the hall resounded with the praises of the Countess: suddenly they changed the strain, and sung the deeds of heroes, and the glory of Fitz-Osborne.—Walter seized that moment. “And is Alan”—said he, “content with the praises of *past* actions?—Shall he not continue to deserve them?”—The Earl started, and Matilda blushed.—“Read the will of Henry”—pursued Walter, presenting a paper. The Earl cast his eye over the contents. “Yes,”—cried he, rising, “my sovereign shall be obeyed, and I will wipe the rust from my sword.” “O Alan!” cried the Countess;—she called Alice, took the child in her arms, again

again repeated, "O Alan!"—and looked at Fitz-Osborne. "Matilda"—said the Earl, in a softened tone.—"No," resumed he, assuming a more determined air, "no, thou *wouldst* not have thy husband a traitor to his prince, and to his honour."

A generous spirit beamed in the eyes of the Countess. "True—O most true!" cried she, "the daughter of De Burgh should love a hero.—Thou shalt go—I will array thee for the battle." "My wife!—my heroine!" exclaimed Fitz-Osborne, clasping her in his arms. Envy stung the soul of Walter. "I will interrupt your loves!" said he to himself, and a glance of malice darted from his eye.

The feast broke up—Fitz Osborne retired to give orders to his vassals. Walter whispered young Arundel to steal the Countess from her sorrows, and then followed the Earl. "My brother,"—said Walter, "I could not have suspected such fortitude from thy Matilda." "Is she not noble?" asked the Earl. "Surpassing all  
her

her sex"—replied Walter. "Yet she loves me"—said Fitz-Osborne. "I believe so"—answered Walter. "Believe—canst thou entertain a doubt?" "Women are naturally fickle"—interrupted the dissembler. "Matilda fickle—my Matilda?" "I said not thy Matilda." "But thou meant'st her." "Thou knowest not—or if I did, my thoughts were nothing." "True"—said the Earl; yet his countenance wore the air of perplexity. They returned to the apartment where they had left the Countess, and found her conversing with Arundel, who held the infant Alan in his arms. Fitz-Osborne started involuntarily. "Heed them not," said Walter, in a mysterious tone. And that moment the fell arrows of suspicion pierced the heart of Fitz-Osborne.

The tender Matilda, agitated with fears for her husband, yet unwilling to disclose them, fought to cover her concern with the veil of heroism. Glory was on her lips, and apprehension in her soul; she spoke



spoke of the battle, and turned pale at her own description.—The Earl, attentive only to her words, perceived not her emotions. “Yes”—said he to himself, “unfaithful Matilda, thou canst support the thoughts of my absence, while thou hast such a solacer as Arundel.” Walter perceived that his unworthy artifice had succeeded, and the looks which he frequently cast towards the Countess and Arundel, added new force to the suspicions of his brother.

In the earliest dawn of the ensuing morn the Earl arose; with hasty and distracted steps he traversed the spacious park, and plunged into the thickest recesses of a neighbouring forest. Here extended on the damp earth did Walter find him, and approached like the first tempter, to utter the effusions of fraud, under the mask of friendship.

“My brother,”—said the recreant, “why this posture?—Is it meet for Fitz-Osborne—for the husband of Matilda?—

“Ha!”

“Ha!” replied the Earl, starting, “Matilda, saidst thou—where is she now?”—  
“In the court of the castle with Arundel, waiting thy return.” “The Countess with Arundel?” “Yes, they hold sprightly converse; he beguiles her of her grief for thee.” “O Heaven!” exclaimed the Earl, rising. “My brother sure you do not suspect,” cried Walter, with an affected hesitation. “Suspect! have I cause?” “Come, let us return to the castle,” said Walter. “Tell me,” resumed the Earl, “tell me before we stir, hast thou perceived any change in Matilda?” “My brother!”—cried Walter, with an air of mysterious sorrow. “Torture me no further,” exclaimed the Earl, “I am on the rack of suspense:—Matilda—Arundel—O Heaven!” “Unhappy Alan!” cried Walter, casting down his eyes. “Unhappy—then it is true!”—but by Heaven I will sacrifice the minion at her feet!” “Nay, stop, be not so impetuous,” said Walter,—“we have no  
proof!

proof!—false—false woman!—I thought thy soul was mine, yet hast thou given it to a courtly toy, a gilded insect—at first sight too, O monstrous!” No—not at first sight perhaps:—they may have been known *before*.”——“Ha!—thou bringest conviction to me. Let us return.”——“Fool!” cried Walter to himself, “thou runnest blindfold into the snare, and thy peace shall perish!”

The Countess hastened to meet her Lord, with light footsteps and a smiling countenance. “Thou art the daughter of De Burgh,” said the Earl. “And thy loving Matilda,”—answered she, putting one snowy arm around his neck. “She is not false!” said Fitz-Osborne to himself, and returned her embrace. Walter beheld that renewed confidence with rage and malice, yet he assumed an aspect foreign to his heart, and cast a glance of feigned compassion towards his brother. The Earl hastily tore himself from Matilda, and walked into the castle. Walter soon



soon joined him. "Didst thou observe her countenance?" said Fitz-Osborne,—

"I *did*," returned Walter, with a deep sigh. "Hell! Hell!" cried the Earl, in a transport of frenzy. This violent resentment did not suit the purpose of Walter, and he sought to allay the storm he had raised; but his foothings were couched so artfully as to fix an indelible sting in the bosom of his brother.

Nine days more passed away, and on the tenth was the Earl to depart. He took Walter aside. "I go," said he, "and who shall guard the faith of Matilda." "That will I," replied Walter. "Best of kinsmen and of friends!" said the Earl, embracing him, "to thy care then I commit the protection of my honour. We have yet but suspicion:—do thou take heed to prevent certainty."—Arundel quitted the castle that day, and the Earl surprised Matilda weeping. "Do these tears fall for our guest?" said he.—

"O Alan!

“ O Alan !—to-morrow !” answered the Countess. “ True, I depart with the morning’s dawn—but then thou wilt not lament me.” “ Not lament thee, Alan ?” “ No,” said the Earl, correcting himself ; “ for then where would be thy heroism ?” “ O, my Lord, my husband, I am no longer a heroine :—so soon to lose thee—so very soon !—Alas ! I am still a woman, and a wife !” These words changed the suspicions of the Earl into tenderness, but Walter shortly inspired him with emotions of a different nature.

Early on the ensuing morn, all the youth of Fitz-Osborne’s domains, attired in warlike garb, and mounted on proud couriers, waited the coming forth of their chief in the court of the castle. The Earl array’d himself in splendid armour, and Matilda closed the lacings of his helmet. To his bosom hung the bloody cross, the badge of religion and valour, and his right hand grasped a glittering faulchion. He presented himself to his  
fol-

followers, and a peal of exultation rent the air.

Matilda rushed out. "I see thee for the last time!" cried she, casting herself into his arms.—"O Alan—Alan—can I live and lose thee?" "Thou lovest me, Matilda"—said the Earl fondly—"thou lovest me, and we will meet again." He embraced her, and called for Alice and his infant son. "Here"—said he to Walter, putting the young Alan in his arms—"here is part of thy charge. Be thou lord of this castle, and protector of Matilda, during the absence of Fitz Osborne." The Countess set up a cry of grief, and again pressed her husband to her breast. He sighed, kissed her cheek, mounted his neighing steed, looked back thrice, and rode off at the head of his followers.—Matilda remained rooted to the spot on which she stood: When her eyes could no longer discover Alan—"He is gone!" cried she, and fell motionless on the earth. Her attendants, assisted by the treacherous

ous



ous Walter, raised and supported her to the castle. They recovered her to life, and she desired to be left alone with Alice and the child.

“Almighty disposer of events,” (said she, taking young Alan in her arms, and falling on her knees) “do thou hear the petition of a wife and mother. Guard my husband with the shield of thy strength; he is thy own soldier, O God, and fighteth in thy cause. Be rage banished from his bosom; let mercy and valour, hand in hand, lead him to conquest. Return him to his native land, and to his loving wife in honour and safety. — And thou, who art the protector of the orphan and the helpless, defend the tender years of this innocent babe from the scourge of oppression, and the arts of falshood. Inspire him with the love of piety and truth, and give him to emulate the renown of his sire. So shall the soul of Matilda rejoice, and her last breath be quivered out in praise and thanksgiving.”

The Countess continued kneeling some time in silent ejaculation, and Alice imitated her posture. At length both arose, and the Countess calling her attendants, divested herself of the rich and gorgeous dress she had on for a mourning habit. "Never," said she to Alice, "never will I quit these sable robes, 'till I again behold Fitz-Osborne."

Walter's heart beat high with the transports of successful villiany; but not willing to encounter the penetrating eye of Matilda, he retired from her presence, to the shades of the forest. "Yes," cried he, in the accent of exultation, "my prey is in the toils. Matilda, the beautiful Matilda, shall be mine, and I will triumph over the credulous Alan!—fool!—to leave his best treasure in the hands of the spoiler—to commit his son too to my protection;—yes, it shall be such protection as the wolf affords the lamb!"

He

He returned to the castle, but things were not yet ripe for a disclosure, and he rather avoided than sought the Countess, fearful that passion might prove too strong for craft. Matilda passed her hours in household duties, and in vows for the safety of her Lord. News arrived that Fitz-Osborne had embarked, and a mandate for Walter's return to court, came at the same time. He obeyed, and found a storm burst over his head, which required some address to dissipate. The Lord De Gray accused him, in the presence of Henry, of having carried on a criminal intercourse with his daughter, before his late embassy, and claimed either the right of combat, or a proper reparation by marriage.—The King, trembling for the danger of his favourite, chose the latter; and to engage Walter's compliance, made him a gift of a castle and some estates, which had been alienated to the crown.



Walter pretended to yield to the prayers of the King, what his own soul wished; and this submission endeared him still more than ever to his master. The shameful nuptials were immediately solemnized with much pomp and splendour. A son, the fruit of criminal love was legitimated by law; and Walter carried him and his spouse to the castle with which Henry had presented him. But not long did he continue in that spot. His passion for the Countess returned with double force on a comparison of her chastity with the weakness of his wife: Strange, that a conviction of her virtue should inspire him with a desire to destroy it:—Yet so it was, and he hastened to the dwelling of his destined victim.

Matilda received him with her wonted cordiality, and he informed her of his marriage, but not of the circumstances which preceded it. In an accent full  
of

of sweetness she congratulated him on his felicity, and made fervent vows for its continuance. Walter sighed. "Why that sigh, my brother?" asked Matilda. "Hope," said he, in a dejected tone, "is a fatal deceiver; it teaches us to expect happiness, where it is not to be found, and when we are ensnared beyond the possibility of escape, withdraws its flattering illusions." He quitted her presence at these words, with a pensive and melancholy air.

"Alas!" said the innocent Matilda to herself, "how terrible is the lot of humanity; worth cannot exempt from its calamities, or Walter would be happy; severed as I am from the Lord of my affections, my fate is yet preferable to his: I mourn an accidental separation, but Walter that of the soul. While the Countess was thus bewailing the imaginary misfortune of Walter, he, with all the cruel ingenuity of fraud, was labour-

ing to afflict her with real miseries.—  
Instead of retiring to lament his unhappiness, he was that instant employed in writing a letter to the Earl, fraught with dark hints and diabolical mystery.

This treacherous paper overtook Alan at Cyprus, and another from Matilda, filled with all the tender solicitude of love, reached him at the same time.—  
He perused that the first, and kissing it with fervour, placed it next his heart. His hand trembled as he broke the seal of Walter's letter. "O Matilda," said he, "this is either thy condemnation or acquittance!" He hesitated still. "It is better to dream of happiness," said he, (throwing it from him) "than to awake to misery." Another pause determined him. "Yet," cried he, taking it again, "this, by giving a confirmation of her innocence, may restore to my harrassed bosom its wonted peace." He perused the fatal contents, and that peace vanished for ever!

Fired



Fired with jealous rage, he snatched the testimony of Matilda's affections from his breast, and tore it into a thousand pieces. "So," cried he, scattering the fragments; "so, disloyal and unchaste Matilda, would I treat thee and thy infamous paramour."

The shock was too afflicting for nature to sustain; a paroxysm of frenzy took from him all powers of judgment, and in its height he wrote the following words to Walter.

"Shall Fitz-Osborne be the sport of  
" an adulteress? See!—she points the  
" finger of derision at her credulous husband—  
" but these smiles of joy, base  
" woman, shall be converted into tears  
" of blood!—Thou hast a dagger, Walter—  
" use it for my honour, and thy  
" own!"——

While the unhappy Earl was thus tortured by all the pangs of jealousy, Walter exulted at the prospect of success. He knew, from various accounts, that

Europe no longer held his brother, and now began to lay aside the mask, which had hitherto concealed his designs. His visits to the castle of Fitz-Osborne became more frequent, and of longer duration ; and he gradually changed the appearance of fraternal affection to something more tender. He complained to Matilda of the trouble he endured, from the uncertain temper of his wife, and always concluded his invectives against her with studied encomiums on his auditor. When he beheld her softened to compassion, he would catch her hand, as if unconscious of the action, and sighing exclaim, " O Alan, what a happiness is thine !"

Suspicion is the attendant of guilt, and the bosom of Matilda was equally devoid of both. She listened to him with complacency, and practised every gentle art of kindness, to restore him to the repose he pretended to lament. Vice has a facility

cility of imposing on itself, even where it seeks to deceive others; and Walter fancied he saw a secret passion lurk under the mask of pity: This idea, while it made him redouble his assiduities, rendered him less careful of concealing the cause, and the eye of innocence alone could any longer mistake it.

At length weary of the shadow of restraint, he determined to disclose himself; and one day seeking the Countess, besought her to dismiss her attendants. She complied, yet wondered at the request.

“Matilda,” said he, (dropping on one knee, and taking her hand) “my soul labours with a secret, the revealing of which *may* be my happiness, or my destruction. I have struggled with a powerful emotion, but it has proved too strong for my exertions. Custom has affixed the idea of criminality to what has really no affinity to guilt, and man would have



those laws, which are the offspring of his caprice, regarded as the inspiration of divinity : but the soul of Matilda is above the prejudices of the vulgar, her discernment is too clear to be imposed on by the artifices of priestcraft, and the delusions of superstition. She will know that the emotions of the heart are involuntary, and therefore cannot be criminal ;—and since not criminal, why not indulged ? Beauteous Matilda, I have this heart—I feel these emotions ; they are caused by thee alone, and thus prostrate at thy feet, I dare to tell my love !”

“ Thy shame !” cried the Countess, starting, while the blush of virtuous indignation illumined her features. “ Base fop-hister !—is the daughter of Hubert—the wife of thy brother, a fit object for insult ? My husband—thou art far away, but I have still a protector !”

Walter, though stung to the soul, concealed his rage, and again falling at her feet,

feet, "O, Matilda," said he, "thy repentment is worse than death:—thou knowest the spring of my offence;—love—the most ardent love."——

"Love, from thee!—the brother of my husband!—Begone—base and unworthy.—Alan—the injured Alan—shall learn how thou wouldst requite his benefits."——

She would have left him at these words, but he caught her robe.——"Matilda," said he, in an humble tone, "thy virtue has shewn me the deformity of vice. I now see the futility of those arguments, with which I would have imposed on myself and thee. My life is at thy disposal—take it as the only compensation for my crime: but I beseech thee wound not the heart of Alan, by a discovery of his brother's unworthiness."

The Countess was softened. "I forgive thee," said she, "but this castle must hold thee no more, 'till my Lord return.

return.—Begone instantly, and may the sincerity of thy repentance merit that favour from Heaven, which thy guilt has forfeited.” Walter, assuming an aspect of humility and sorrow, made a low obeisance, and retired. He quitted the castle, and when out of the reach of observation, his countenance expressed all the dire sensations of an abandoned soul. “Proud woman,” said he to himself, “I will yet triumph over thy peevish virtue. Thy scorn has cured me, and hate shall now exact, as a sacrifice, what love would have accepted as a favour.” The promptness of his departure, and the contrition of his looks, but above all the confidence of innocence, inspired Matilda with a tranquillity which the votaries of vice can never feel. And fraught with sentiments of piety and goodness, she prayed for the strengthening of his virtue, and the forgiveness of his offence. In the mean time a summons from Henry suspended



pended the execution of that dissembler's projects.

This weak and vicious prince, always necessitous and always profuse, now wanted the assistance of Walter to furnish some new method of exaction, by which he might plunder from his people the dear bought fruits of their industry, to lavish on ignoble pleasures and unworthy parasites.

The first support of a throne, the *love* of its subjects, had long been lost to Henry, and he had now nothing to trust to but their *fear*. Fatal and weak resource!—Providence has endued royalty with power, for the sole purpose of increasing the happiness and the security of mankind. When a monarch, forgetful of this indispensable duty, would divest himself of the paternal character for that of a tyrant, the bands of obedience are loosed, and a nation, not habituated to slavery, will no longer regard him but as an idol of their own formation, which  
resistance

resistance can reduce to its primitive insignificance.

Henry found an apt counsellor in Walter: by his advice the papal authority was called in to dignify extortion. The King wrote a lettet to the Pope, in which he renewed the shameful fealty which had been exacted from his sire, and again repeated at his own coronation; and concluded, by desiring his Holiness to dispatch a legate to England, who might assist him in the work of forcing his refractory barons and clergy to give those supplies, which had been so long withheld from his supplications.

The court of Rome complied with this request, and a nuncio was immediately sent over to England with full power to launch all the thunders of the church, even against its own members, in case of disobedience. Thus armed, Henry set no bounds to his rapacity; the people were awed into compliance by a dread of

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spiritual censures, and the legate drained the monasteries of those rich funds which had equally served the purposes of hospitality and splendour.

Such was the state of things when Walter received that fatal mandate from his brother, which had been dictated in a moment of frenzy. He perused it with eagerness, and exulted at the success of his artifices. To ensure the execution of future villainy, he shewed this letter to the King, and abused his ear with a feigned tale of the Countess's incontinence with one of her own vassals.— Henry, too indolent to dive into the truth of this accusation, and too vicious himself to doubt the vice of another, gave an implicit faith to his favourite's affirmation. Walter desired that the matter might be kept secret, but at the same time obtained a power, under the royal signet, of punishing his sister-in-law, if her guilt was proved, by whatever means he might find expedient.

Unwar-



Unwarrantable as it is, by all the laws of justice and humanity, to give to the accuser the power of a judge, the circumstances of the times emboldened Henry to give such a power, and Walter to use it. Attended by a numerous band of desperate ruffians, he took his way to the castle of Fitz-Osborne. The domestics, fearless of danger, suffered them to pass the moat without resistance, and when Walter saw himself surrounded by his adherents at the other side, he commanded the bridge to be drawn up, and placed guards at all the avenues.

Astonished and dismayed by this appearance of hostility, the servants of the castle flew to inform the Countess. Walter followed quick upon their steps. He found her in an inner apartment, fondling young Alan, who played at her feet, and pointing out his infant graces to Alice, who stood near.

At the sight of Walter, the maternal smiles that had brightened her countenance,

nance, gave place to the frowns of insulted virtue, and arising, with an aspect of severe dignity, she demanded the cause of his intrusion ?

“ In this read my excuse,” cried he, presenting a paper. The well known characters of Alan met her view, and she pressed the superscription to her lips.— With all the eagerness of love she hastened to open it, and the contents impressed her with surprize and horror. A cold dew overspread her limbs ; she gazed at those terrible words, ’till all sight was lost, and still grasping the paper in her hand, fell senseless to the earth.

Alice flew to succour her mistress.—  
“ Stop,” cried the dissembling Walter,  
“ it were better perhaps that she no more saw the light of day ; the consciousness of guilt has overpowered her.” “ What talkest thou of guilt ?” interrupted Alice,  
“ the soul of Matilda knows it not. Who dares accuse her ?” “ I *do*,” answered  
Walter,

Walter, sternly. "Then thou art a false miscreant!" returned Alice, enraged—"God and good angels know, that my mistress is more pure from sin, than the mother that gave thee birth. What Matilda—the good, the chaste Matilda?—Blusters on thy slanderous and lying tongue!"——

"Bear that abusive woman hence;" said Walter to his attendants. Four ruffians seized Alice. Young Alan, frightened by the struggles of his nurse, clung round her crying, and Alice getting one hand loose clasped him still closer to her. "Sweet Alan," she cried, "they would slander thy mother, and murder thee.—But I will not quit thee!—they may kill me, but I will not quit thee!" At length obliged to yield to superior strength, she was torn from the child, and hurried away to another apartment. That moment Matilda opened her eyes, and Walter commanded his attendants to retire.

The



The Countess retained but a confused remembrance of what had passed, but the sight of Walter, and the cries of Alice, which resounded through the castle, soon restored her to fresh horrors. Young Alan crept towards her, and hid his face in her bosom.

“Dear child they will not injure thee,” said the Countess, kissing his forehead, “be still, sweet infant, thy mother is the only victim aimed at.”——“Tell me,” added she, rising, “what means this horrible mystery?—Why am I called an adulteress?—Why is the dagger to drink my blood?—Is it Alan—Is it my husband who commands this?—O Heaven!—Yet I do not deprecate the blow—Strike then Walter; but first tell me, why I am accused:—Suffer me to clear my fair fame, and then take a life which I value no longer, since Alan would destroy it!”

“And yet thou canst love this barbarian,”—answered Walter; “thou canst love  
love

love him, and spurn me, inflexible Matilda!—See, I fall at thy feet, I offer thee fame, life and liberty, it is in my power to withhold them, but I give them to thee at the price of love.”

“O Heaven!” cried Matilda, with an accusing look, “is it thus that thou protectest thy votaries? shall vice lord it over virtue? Wilt thou uphold the wicked and crush the innocent?”

“Call not on Heaven,” said Walter, “thy fate is in my hands—see by my power and thy weakness, the futility of the thing thou stilest virtue. My schemes whom thou thinkest vicious have prospered; I have imposed on the credulous Alan, and I have caught thee in the snare. No mortal can now deliver thee from my power, and Heaven is at rest. Return my love, and thy fame shall be white and unspotted as the new-fallen snow. But if thy pride refuses my happiness, if thy brow is still clothed in disdain, and thy  
eye

eye still averted with hate, think not I will continue to supplicate as a slave what I may command as a master. Nay more, thy life and thy fame shall be sacrificed to my security."

"Base wretch!" cried the Countess, "dost thou think I will relinquish the reality of honour for the shadow?" "I leave thee to consider," answered Walter, passing out and securing the door of the chamber.

The unhappy Matilda, overwhelmed with horror and grief, stood motionless for some time in all the silent agony of despair. At length throwing herself on her knees, "O God of mercy," cried she, in an accent of anguish, "art thou deaf to my misery?—wilt thou suffer the wicked to triumph?—Where are thy avenging bolts, thy forked lightnings—are they reserved for the innocent alone?" Young Alan, trembling and in tears, clasped his little hands around the Countess's neck.



neck. "My babe, my tender babe," cried she, pressing him to her, "thou hast the features of thy father, but not his cruelty—thou wouldst soften my distress by thy innocent caresses, and he—O Heaven—Fitz-Osborne—would plunge a dagger in my breast! Yet the time may come, when thou too shalt regard the memory of thy mother with detestation, when the sound of her name shall inspire thee with disgust, because thou wilt imagine it connected with infamy. O God, shall the darling of my bosom execrate his tender parent? Eternal and Almighty Being, wilt thou suffer such impiety?"

At these words, the wretched Matilda sunk exhausted on the floor. A dying languor invaded her frame, her lips ceased to utter exclamations, and her eyes now fixed in their sockets, and now gazing wildly round, proved alone that her body was yet animated.

In a little time her persecutor again appeared, and his presence gave her the  
vigour

vigour of resentment. By an involuntary emotion, she caught young Alan to her arms, and that action inspired Walter with fresh hope. "Say, beautiful Matilda," said he, prostrating himself before her, "am I still to deplore thy cruelty, or hast thou determined my happiness?" "I have determined to die," replied she in a tone of dignity, "and to die virtuous.—Give me death—a husband requires it, and I shrink not at the stroke."

"'Tis well"—returned Walter; "thou art satisfied to relinquish all the dear delights of life for a fantastic good?—betrust thee that honour exists but in the opinions of men, and that thy name will descend with ignominy to posterity.—Where then is the advantage of thy virtue, if thou shalt be loaded with infamy, and I covered with renown?"

"Cease thy fallacious arguments," said the Countess, there is an ETERNAL Judge, who shall decide between thee and me!—tremble miscreant at the idea of that  
sen-

sentence, which shall exact a dread and terrible retribution for my sufferings!" "Sweet pledge of my affection for a cruel husband," added she, turning to young Alan, "thy tender years will be bereft of a mother's care, but I commit thee to the protection of the all-powerful: He, who is the father of the helpless and the scourge of the wicked!"

At that moment, Walter, with the rapidity of an eagle darting on his prey, caught up the child. The Countess uttered a piercing shriek. "Barbarian!" she exclaimed, "thou wilt not murder my babe, the darling of my soul?" "His fate is in thy hands," answered he, with an insulting air. "See," cried she, kneeling—"see to what thou hast humbled me!—Drench thy dagger in my blood—but spare the precious life of my infant.—My child—my innocent child—I pray thee spare him!"

"I will cherish him in my bosom," said Walter, "if thou art kind." "No, recreant,"



recreant," exclaimed the Countess rising, "no—I will debase myself no more by supplications. May all the horrors of Hell surround thee, if thou attempt to hurt my son!" "Thus I brave them," cried Walter, pulling forth a dagger, and holding it to young Alan's breast. Matilda, in all the wildness of despair, rushed upon him, and received the deadly point in her bosom. A purple tide issued from her heart, she staggered and fell. For the first time, her base destroyer felt the sting of remorse. "It is done," said she in a faint voice, "be satisfied with one victim." Walter attempted to succour her, but she repulsed him with horror.

"Leave me to die," said she, "thou hast calumniated my fame, and the blood thou hast shed shall rise in judgment against thee!—but my child—one sweet embrace." She attempted to raise herself. At the same moment the last breath for-

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took her lips, and she fell, lovely, even in death.

That sight penetrated the obdurate soul of Walter. Her words had struck him with horror, and already he imagined himself surrounded by avenging furies. Possessed by this idea, he uttered loud and frantic cries, and his adherents, alarmed, hastened to the scene of death. Though accustomed to villainy, they recoiled at this dreadful spectacle. That action restored Walter to his usual dissimulation.

“A self-accusing conscience,” cried he, “has anticipated justice; this unhappy woman has inflicted on herself the punishment with which I was intrusted. Bear hence the corse, let it be immediately interred, since her last action has precluded the rites of our holy religion. The ruffians obeyed this order, and carried the remains of the injured Matilda to the most hidden part of the forest; there having dug a pit and thrown in the  
body;

body, they covered it with earth and returned to await the further commands of their superior.

Mean time, Walter released Alice from her confinement, and gave young Alan to her charge. The first use she made of her recovered freedom, was to fly to the Countess's apartment: but with what horror was she seized to see the floor crimsoned with blood, which a fatal presage told her, was that of her mistress. She called on the name of Matilda, and was only answered by a fullen echo.—“Lady, beloved lady,” cried she in the madness of anguish, “they have murdered thee, sweet lady!—foolish Alan, smile not—they have shed the blood of innocence—they have killed thy mother.” At these words she rushed out in search of Walter, but he had already quitted the castle. Furious from suspense, she would have precipitated herself and the child into the moat; but the



followers of Walter prevented that rashness, and forcibly carrying her into the castle, closed the gates and set a strict watch over her.

Let us now return to the author of these horrors. That short-lived remorse that had possessed him, soon gave place to an anxiety for his safety. Instead of going to his own dwelling, he made the best of his way to Winchester, where the King then held his court. Walter rushed into Henry's presence, and prostrated himself at his feet. "My liege," said he, holding out the mandate of Matilda's death, "this commission was useless; the unhappy Countess has added suicide to the number of her crimes!"

The attendants of Henry, surprised at these words, regarded each other with looks of suspense and doubt. "Thy honour then is satisfied,"—replied the King—"and thou art saved the pain of avenging it." That answer inspired Walter

ter with confidence, but concealing his satisfaction and assuming a countenance of sorrow and confusion, he related to the assembled courtiers the fallacious tale, which had already imposed upon the King. Those who had seen Matilda the brightest ornament of the court, and were acquainted with her virtues, gave small credit to this fiction. But the recent disgrace of John De Burgh, her kinsman, from whom the King had wrested his Irish possessions; and above all, the power of the favourite, prevented them from declaring their opinions; and they joined with one voice in condemning the imaginary crime of the Countess, and applauding the resentment of her brother-in-law.

Secure of impunity from this quarter, Walter turned his thoughts to the commission of new enormities. The love he had entertained for Matilda, expired with its object, and envy and avarice, the pre-

vailing propensities of his soul, now exerted their full influence. Not satisfied with the honours and the wealth, which royal favour had poured upon him, he thirsted for the possession of Fitz-Osborne's inheritance. His base heart suggested that the chief obstacle which intervened to the accomplishment of his wishes, was the life of his brother, and he determined to destroy it: Well acquainted with the impetuosity of the Earl's disposition, he hoped that the effects of returning love and sudden remorse, might save him the commission of actual murder, and to that intent, dispatched the following letter to that injured noble.

### THE LETTER.

“ MATILDA is no more!—her own  
“ hand has avenged thee. I draw a veil  
“ over this scene of horror; let it suffice that I tell thee, her last breath  
“ implor-



“ implored a blessing on thy head, and  
“ asserted her innocence. Yet I knew it  
“ to be tainted—but still thou wast too  
“ precipitate : in the gloom of a cloyster  
“ she might have lamented her frailty,  
“ and heaven perhaps had accepted the  
“ tears of penitence, as a sufficient atone-  
“ ment. My brother, she was guilty—  
“ but I beheld that bosom, once so  
“ beauteous, discoloured with gore.—  
“ I saw those eyes, once brilliant as the  
“ star of morn, clouded with the mist  
“ of death ! She was guilty—but sui-  
“ cide—I tremble!—Thou art avenged,  
“ my brother. Her offence is expiated  
“ in her blood—be thou at peace.”

Trusting in the effects of this letter  
Walter acted as if he were already pos-  
sessed of the Earl's estates. The flower  
of Fitz-Osborne's vassals had followed him  
to the holy land, none remained, but  
*those* whose decrepid age or tender youth

incapacitated them for the toils of war. From such opponents Walter had nothing to apprehend, and the domestics of the castle were soon gained over to his interest by mercenary or fearful motives. The faithful Alice alone spurned at his presents, and derided his authority:— confined to an apartment in the castle, she spent whole days in mourning over young Alan, and execrating the destroyer of his mother.

At length her apprehensions for the safety of this child, induced her to that submission, which a fear for her own could never have exacted. Walter, incensed by her incessant reproaches, threatened to dismiss her from the charge with which she was intrusted, and from that time, the sorrow that preyed upon her heart, vented itself no more in complaints; she wept in secret, and smiled before the oppressor.

This dissimulation, so necessary, procured her a greater degree of freedom; she

she was permitted to wander through the domains, though spies were still placed over her steps. The calmness of her behaviour, during these excursions, precluded all suspicion, and the vigilance of her guards relaxed imperceptibly. One evening, when secure of being unseen, she gave a loose to the melancholy that oppressed her. Led by an irresistible impulse, she advanced to the forest, and penetrated through the thickest shades. At length, weariness and grief compelled her to stop, and seating herself and young Alan on the ground, she meditated on the mystery that shrouded Matilda's fate.— All at once a mound of earth at some distance, yet fresh and bare of verdure, attracted her eyes. "O Heaven!" cried she, rising, "is this the grave of my mistress?" In approaching it she perceived something glitter in a nest of brambles, and stooping, discerned the tablets of the Countess. Uttering a piercing



and frantic shriek, she precipitated herself on the grave.

“Sweet lady,” she cried, “is this then thy burial place?—Is this cold earth the habitation of the virtuous De Burgh? Hearest thou the wailings of thy faithful Alice—seest thou the scalding tears that bedew her cheeks?—Alas, no——Dear lady, thou hearest, thou seest no more!—in the pride of thy youth, in the prime of thy beauty, thou art become a prey to corruption!—But, lady, thou shalt have an avenger—the child of thy bosom shall exact blood for blood.”——“See those hands, O God,” cried she (extending young Alan’s on the grave) “make them the instruments of retribution, intrust them with the sword of justice—let it terrify the soul of Walter, and be plunged in his heart.”

At that instant, a sudden gleam of light shot across the grave. The trees shook with violence, though the air remained

mained calm and unagitated. Alice, trembling, put the tablets in her bosom, and taking young Alan in her arms, hastened out of the forest with tottering steps. The hours which nature had allotted for repose, did Alice pass in all the bitterness of sorrow. As soon as morning dawned, she opened the tablets, and found the following words inscribed within them :

“ Author and eternal Fountain of all  
“ Good, attend to the petition of thy  
“ servant, banish from the bosom of  
“ Walter that criminal love I have so  
“ fatally inspired ; a love which disho-  
“ nours me, and equally offends thy laws.  
“ Restore him to virtue, to gratitude, to  
“ the feelings of fraternal affection, and  
“ give him to lament with penitential  
“ tears the injury he would have done  
“ Fitz Osborne.”

“ O God !

“O God!” cried Alice, after perusing these words, “the mystery is then at length unravelled!—Base Walter—cruel and dissembling caitiff—traitor to thy knightly vows!—thou hast slandered the innocent, and plunged thy sword in the bosom of the helpless!” Here her voice became suffocated with sobs; she embraced young Alan, bedewed his face with her tears, and when the violence of her emotions had in some measure subsided, looked again at the tablets. “Yes, my mistress,” she cried, “thou shalt be avenged—this dire and fatal secret shall sleep in the breast of Alice ’till Fitz-Osborne returns to his native land. Then shall the cowardly spirit of Walter shrink within him—then shall his base blood be poured forth to appease thine!”

While Alice thus indulged in the effusions of grief and indignation, Walter waited in suspense and anxiety the event of his letter. A year thus passed in expectation,



pectation, when suddenly a rumour arose that the Earl had fallen in battle. More authentic accounts soon arrived, and the certainty of his death was at once announced and lamented.

It was said, that on the fatal day which had put a period to his life, he had seemed animated more by the rage of despair, than the thirst of conquest. That with irresistible force he had pierced through the thickest ranks of the enemy, and laid whole heaps of slaughtered infidels at his feet : 'Till at length hemmed in on all sides, oppressed and overpowered, he had fallen, mangled with a thousand wounds. This intelligence inspired Walter with a savage joy, which he strove in vain to conceal. One bar yet remained to the accomplishment of his desires, and that was the existence of young Alan. The idea of a new crime startled not a soul familiarized to guilt, but fear acted in the place of pity, and told him that  
the

the catastrophe of the Countess, now received as he had represented it, might be enquired into, if he embrued his hands in the blood of her offspring.——That thought restrained him, but he still panted for the possessions of Fitz-Osborne, and his invention fertile in vicious schemes, soon suggested a method to obtain them.

A wealthy vassal of his brother's had once a daughter named Adela, the favourite companion of Alan in his boyish days. Unmindful of the distinctions of birth and rank, this unhappy maiden cherished an ardent passion for him who had been her play-mate, and the love of Adela for Lord Alan, became the chief topic of discourse with all the village youth. It at length reached the old Earl's ear, and he trembled at the apprehension of his son's being equally enamoured. But Lord Alan yet knew not what it was to love : glory occupied in his soul  
the

the place of softer sensations: he therefore readily assented to the Earl's command, who willed him to repair to court, where the reception he met was as flattering as his merits were eminent. This absence wounded the peace and health of the wretched Adela. No longer able to partake of rural sports, she wasted those hours in sighs and tears which her sprightly companions devoted to rustic dances on the shaven green. — Like the beauteous flower, which enlivened by the influence of the sun, expands its glossy leaves to the eye, and again closes them when deprived of his cheering beams, so the beauties of Adela, to which the pretence of Alan had given life and lustre, sunk, languished, and faded at his departure.

After becoming Earl of Fitz-Osborne, he beheld the fair Matilda, and his imagination lost every trace of her whom he had never loved. His union with that  
lady



lady was too severe a stroke for the tender Adela to support; a hasty decline quickly put a period to her woes and her existence. The Earl heard of her death, recollected her love, and gave a tear to her memory as some compensation for the injury he had unwillingly occasioned; he took Maurice, her father, into high favour and confidence: but this man, by nature base, saw in Alan not his benefactor, but the destroyer of his child.—At the news of his decease, Maurice exulted as at the fall of an hated enemy, and Walter, who was no stranger to his sentiments, beheld in him a fit instrument for his project. Both had shortly an interview, and avarice joined to a desire of affixing a stain on the memory of the Earl, induced Maurice to a ready compliance.

When every thing was concerted, Walter returned to his own habitation, and Maurice hastened to court. He desired  
to

to be conveyed to the King, as having an affair of much consequence to communicate. When brought into Henry's presence, he prostrated himself at his feet, and continued silent. The King surprised at this behaviour, commanded him to speak. "Yes, my liege," cried he in a perturbed tone, "yes, I will speak, and may Heaven prosper my words as they are sincere. I had once a daughter, beauteous as the rising morn, and lively as the bounding roe. She was my only wealth; and treachery, most cruel treachery has rendered me poor indeed!—Alan of Fitz-Osborne, beheld my child, and by artful blandishments practised upon her unwary soul to return him love for love: yet his persuasions could not seduce her to dishonour; and she refused to be engaged to him by any other ties than the holy ones of wedlock. Finding her inflexible, he lodged a solemn contract in her hands, which bound him

to

to take her alone for wife as soon as his father's death should give him liberty to follow his own inclinations. My child was ensnared in the mesh of deceit, and her life became a prey to it. The demise of his sire rendered Alan, Earl of Fitz-Osborne, and our master. Far from accomplishing his promise, he contrived by various artifices to possess himself of the contract, and immediately after, quitting the mansion of his ancestors, remained in the pursuit of glory (for he was brave though a deceiver) during the space of some years. At the end of that career, he beheld the daughter of Hubert, and scorned the lowly Adela. In fine, my liege, his marriage with Matilda sunk my wretched daughter to the tomb."—"And why was not this revealed before?" interrupted the King. "My liege," answered Maurice, "he was my master, could the poverty of a vassal cope with the power of a noble?—I was oppressed, but



but his death has set me free. I ask not retribution since Adela is gone for ever, but I desire revenge upon his memory and his name; and never will I render a shameful obedience to the son of Matilda, the usurper of my daughter's rights. — Here, O King, do I demand in the name of justice and the law, that the illegitimate son of Fitz-Osborne shall not inherit his possessions.”

“Hast thou proof for this,” said Henry, “I have my liege,” answered Maurice. “Let the papers of Fitz Osborne be searched forthwith, and if the contract is not found, then let me die the death of a traitor.” “It shall be as thou sayest,” said the King, and we will have thee put in close durance, ’till thy truth or thy falsehood be manifest.” “I am content,” replied Maurice.

Henry, unknowing yet how to judge, ordered him to be kept under strict custody ’till called for, and in the mean time dis-

dispatched a courier to Walter, requiring his immediate attendance. That base designer readily obeyed the summons, and the King imparted to him what he had heard. Walter, well skilled in fraud, assumed an appearance of anger, and demanded to see the caitiff, who dared abuse his brother's fame. The King refused the request, but promised that Maurice should meet the fate he deserved, if his assertion was proved to be void of truth.

Walter, still seemingly impatient, desired that since this was denied, the King would on the instant command three of his principal courtiers to accompany him to the castle of Fitz-Osborne. Henry complied, and the Lords Arundel, De Gray, and Salisbury, were ordered to attend him.

During the continuance of that journey, Walter breathed nothing but resentment and vengeance against Maurice.— As he entered the castle, “Now,” cried he, “vile wretch, shall the fame of Fitz-Osborne

Osborne be cleared, and thou convicted of falsehood;" saying this, he hastily traversed the apartments, and his companions followed. Nothing escaped their scrutiny, yet the object of search remained still undiscovered. At length the Lord Salisbury passing into an inner apartment, espied a small casket covered over with dust. This was instantly opened, and from under some other papers which it contained, Lord Arundel pulled forth the contract.

At that sight, Walter assumed a countenance of dismay and confusion, and made a motion as if he would have torn it in pieces, but Lord Arundel, snatching it from his grasp, saluted him Earl of Fitz Osborne.

"O title, grating to my ears, since I gain thee by the dishonour of a brother! exclaimed Walter in a tone of grief.—

"Return, my Lords," pursued he, "return and give the King an account of our  
fatal



fatal commission :—For me, I cannot bear you company, my soul is torn by sorrow and indignation—sorrow that my brother should have lapsed from the path of virtue, and indignation that the name of Fitz-Osborne should be called to shame!”

Imposed upon by this artifice, the credulous nobles took their way to court, carrying with them the contract, and impressed with astonishment at the fraud of the Earl, and with admiration of Walter’s disinterested sentiments. The Lord De Gray, secretly pleased at this accession of power and wealth to his son-in-law, was the first to relate to Henry what happened: upon which Maurice was released from confinement, and on demanding the contract, received it.

A parliament, which the King had called for other purposes some time before, now took cognizance of this affair—Maurice, in the presence of this assembly, deposed to the truth of his former avowal,

vation, and notwithstanding the inconsistencies with which his allegation teemed, no person attempted to confute it.—The manifest wishes of the King, and the mean acquiescence of the nobles, produced an act, which, excluding young Alan from the honors and possessions of his family under the stigma of illegitimacy, conferred them on his uncle.

Walter, though now successful in all his designs, still relinquished not his wonted hypocrisy.—Far from seeming elated at this sudden good fortune, he arrayed himself and his family in mourning weeds upon the passing of the act. He delayed not however to possess himself of the castle of Fitz-Osborne, which was much more magnificent, as well as more commodious, than his late habitation, and shortly removed his household to that place. It is time that we now return to the afflicted Alice and her injured charge. That faithful creature had  
heard

heard of the Earl's death, and the events which succeeded it, with grief and indignation. Well convinced from the tenor of Walter's actions, that the story of the contract had no other origin than his own invention, she execrated him afresh, but dissimulation was now become more necessary than ever, and she set a careful watch over her countenance and lips.

Walter, pleased with the moderation of her conduct, still permitted her attendance on young Alan, whom he now affected to treat with a redoubled tenderness mingled with compassion, and oft declared his education should be equally attended to with that of his own son, Lord William.

The new Countess, ignorant from what motive this kindness sprung, and being herself of a parsimonious and illiberal disposition, tried to counteract what she imagined her husband's real intentions, by a series of harsh and contumelious  
usage



usage towards the fancied object of his affection. Mean time that child, who had entered his sixth year, daily improved in beauty and in spirit. The young Lord William, though older by some months, equalled him not either in bodily or mental endowments, but following the lessons of his mother, fought all occasions to treat him with an haughty air of conscious superiority, which the inborn and noble pride of Alan could ill brook.

Seven years more passed away without any material incident or alteration, but at the end of that time an occurrence happened, which, though trifling in itself, inspired Walter with the most dire resolutions against the victim of his deceit.

One day, as Lord William and Alan, with some peasant children, played in the court of the castle, a boy named Gerald, having a dispute with another of superior strength, received a blow which

felled him to the earth ; and in attempting to arise, was attacked by two more, who took part with his antagonist.

Alae, detesting the inequality of the combat, flew to Gerald's assistance, and commanded the assailants to desist : but instead of obeying, they redoubled their strokes ; and Lord William advancing, asked Alan, with an air of haughtiness, why he who was only a dependant on his father's bounty presumed to exert any authority over those who were equal to himself ?

Alan, replying not but by a glance of disdain, raised Gerald, and striking down the aggressor, quickly compelled the other two to retreat ; then turning to Lord William—" Am I not the son of Fitz-Osborne ?" said he, frowning.—  
" Yes, but base-born," returned Lord William, with a sneer. " My mother was noble as thy own," resumed Alan, in an elevated voice ; " and if for her misfortune,

fortune, and for mine, my fire committed one deed of baseness, yet I am still superior to thee, who are both unjust and unworthy."

Lord William, fired with anger at these words, pulled forth a small poinard which stuck in his belt, and rushing furiously on Alan, would have plunged it in his breast: but he slipping nimbly on one side avoided the stroke, and seizing the guard of the poinard, wrested it out of Lord William's hand, at the same time striking him a blow on the face, which made a torrent of blood gush from his mouth and nostrils.

Some domestics, who had been apprized of the fray by the young peasants, now ran towards them, and after separating, carried them before the Earl.— Lord William, uttering doleful sobs and cries, accused Alan of insulting him, unprovoked, with rude and threatening language, and then related the conclu-



sion of the affair as it had truly happened.

Walter turned to Alan with a stern air, and enquired what he had to plead in his defence?

"My Lord," replied he, indignantly, "I scorn to defend myself against so base an accuser."

"Know you of whom you speak," cried Walter, frowning. "I do," resumed Alan, "he is your son—but injustice, cowardice, and falsehood, have reduced him beneath the level of your meanest vassal!"

At that moment, Walter imagined he heard the accents of Fitz-Osborne—he looked at Alan, and beheld his living image. The blood curdled in his veins; he fancied he saw the sword of vengeance suspended over his head, and his limbs became stiff with horror.

Willing to hide his confusion, he commanded the boys to embrace, and forget what

what had passed ; then hastily retiring to a private apartment, threw himself on a couch, and remained for some moments buried in deep thought.

At length rising, with a countenance dark and terrible, he exclaimed—"Fitz-Osborne—Matilda—ye are avenged!"—"No," cried he, after a pause; "no—a stripling, green in understanding and in years, shall not ravish the fruit of my labours—and perhaps my crimes. Is it thus that Heaven rewards that lenity which induced me to spare the life of a helpless infant?—Heaven—what have I to do with the dreams of priestcraft?—Weak and foolish mercy—to destroy the parents and save the child.—Ha!—have I preserved him who may become my assassin?—He shall die—his blood shall restore my tranquility!"

While the usurper held this soliloquy, Alice had heard of the fray, and trembled for the consequence. She hastened

to seek Alan, and taking him apart, chid his impetuosity.——“What,” cried he, “shall I crouch beneath the insolence of Lord William?—Shall I tamely suffer him to insult me with the misfortune of my birth?—No, mother—the Earl himself approved my conduct, and condemned that of his son.”

“Alas, my child,” cried Alice, “thou art young—thou art ignorant of the arts of dissimulation.

“And still may I continue so.” replied Alan, in a tone full of spirit—“why should the Earl dissimble?—am I not dependant on his bounty—can he not cast me from him fearless of reproach?”

“Bethink thee of that, my child,” resumed Alice, “and let it moderate thy rashness.” “No, mother,” interrupted Alan, “I am not rash—but let Lord William beware how he insults the son of Fitz-Osborne—though the Earl abandon



don me, fear not; Heaven will still raise me a protector. True, I am yet young, but a few years will add strength to my arm, and vigour to my soul. The harvest of glory is free to valour; I despair not to reap its laurels."

"Noble boy!" exclaimed Alice, folding him in a strenuous embrace.——

"O Heaven!" added she, "thou hast heard my prayers——thou hast raised"——

She paused, fearful of having said too much, but Alan heeding not the interruption, returned her endearments, and besought her to moderate her apprehensions. During this time, the usurper experienced all the keen sensations of conscious guilt and tear. His resolution was fixed against the life of Alan, but he still continued in suspense about the means of execution. One time he thought to enter his chamber in the dead of night, and commit the deed with his own hands. But a dread of the clamours of Alice,

prevented him from long retaining that idea, and he at length determined to have recourse to poison, which by being administered to both, might secure him from an accuser.

The hour of retiring now approached, and all the inhabitants of the castle betook themselves to rest. But the watchfulness of guilt sat on the lids of Walter, and precluded them from closing. Extended on a downy couch, he lay brooding infernal machinations, and waiting impatiently for day, when he should put them in execution.

About midnight, the moon shed a sickly gleam of light into the apartment, and at the same time an owl flapping against the casement, uttered an ominous shriek. Walter started involuntarily, and raising his head, beheld an object which froze his soul with terror.

It was the form of Matilda, pale, ghastly, and bloody. The fatal dagger stuck  
in

in her breast, and the sanguinary stream seemed to flow afresh.

Large drops of sweat burst from the pores of Walter, his limbs became convulsed, and he attempted to draw the coverlet over his face, but the phantom approaching tore it from his grasp, and lifting up her hand with a menacing gesture, exclaimed in a shrill and piercing tone, "Attempt not the life of Alan!"—At hearing these words, Walter lost all sense, and fell into a deep and deadly swoon, in which he continued for a considerable time: at length awaking, he rolled his eye-balls wildly round, as if in search of the object of his fear; but the moon had withdrawn her light, and a profound darkness shrouded the apartment. All was silence save the hollow whistling of the wind through the vaulted hall, and the melancholy hooting of the night bird on the battlements.

Walter,



Walter, dismayed and trembling, forsook his couch, and hastily quitted the chamber; then rousing his domestics, called for lights, in a tone that denoted terror and consternation. The Countess alarmed by the noise threw on some loose habiliments, and advanced to the door of her apartment, whither her husband had already come. Servants now attended with lighted tapers, and the countenance of Walter, pale and imprinted with terror, striking her with amazement, she demanded the cause?

Walter replied not for some moments, but continued gazing wildly towards the chamber he had quitted; a repetition of the question brought back his wandering senses, and with a deep sigh he exclaimed, "the hour of vengeance is at hand!" These words gave new wonder to his spouse, and he, confused at their indiscretion, dismissed the servants, telling them he had been discomposed in the manner

manner they beheld, by a fearful dream. They retired at his command, but the Countess, far from being satisfied by this declaration, besought him to discover the truth. Walter, regaining his usual art, assured her he had nothing more to discover, and affected to jest at his weakness : but instead of returning to his own apartment he went into the Countess's bed, and feigned himself asleep to avoid her importunities. Yet though his eyes were closed rest had forsaken them. The words of the phantom still rung in his ear, and with fearful expectation he watched every moment to hear them repeated. The morn soon broke and dissipated his terrors ; he arose, put on his apparel, and walked out of the castle. His steps involuntarily bent towards the forest : on entering it he stopped, and trembled. But suddenly resuming his courage, What," said he to himself, " shall the spirit of Walter be subdued  
by

by an illusion of the senses—shall it be scared by the vain coinage of the imagination?" "And grant," added he after a pause, "that the object which I saw, the accents which I heard, owed their being to reality, not fancy, Why should the injunctions of a feeble shade, weigh with a soul accustomed to deeds of hardness? If it is natural that Matilda should seek to preserve her son, it is also natural that I seek his destruction, since his safety is incompatible with mine. Let the airy form again appear, let it menace, its unsubstantial exertions cannot hurt me, but I will secure myself against a living enemy. Matilda—Fitz-Osborne—and Alan—ye shall form a society in death!"

In speaking thus, he turned his steps from the forest to the habitation of Maurice, who still resided on his domains, and possessed his confidence. To this man he imparted his design; and he, ever ready



ready in iniquity, took the execution on himself. But Walter disclosed not the scene of the preceding night, fearful that the person who willingly undertook to destroy an innocent from the hope of reward, might not yet be proof against supernatural terrors. Maurice engaged to prepare a potion which should mock the force of the most sovereign antidotes, and the next morn but one, was fixed on for administering it.

Walter spent the two intervening nights in the chamber of the Countess, undisturbed, save by the gnawing worm of conscience, which no sophistry can still. But the absence of the phantom inspired him with confidence, and he remained convinced it had been no more than an illusion of the imagination.

The day, fated for a deed of horror, arrived. The deadly draught was already mixed, and the usurper's heart panted with suspense and expectation. Mean-  
time

time his aspect wore an air of serenity and pleasure : he careffed Alan, obliged Lord William (whose spirit still rankled with malice) to embrace him again, and declared that day should be dedicated to festivity, in honour of their second reconciliation.

A feast was prepared according to his orders, and the minstrels waited to enliven it with melody ; but the Countess, incensed at this seeming partiality for Alan, refused to be present.

Walter, nothing disturbed by her forwardness, called for Alice, and seating her next young Alan (whom he had placed at his right hand) “ we will forget distinctions,” cried he, “ this hour is sacred to conviviality and happiness.” So saying he bade Lord William sit beside him, and made a sign to Maurice to place himself at the board.

Alice, who never beheld the usurper without dread or disgust, feared some

new

new machination under this appearance of cordiality. She cast a penetrating glance towards him, and received fresh matter for suspicion. Dissembler as he was, he could not prevent some of the emotions of his soul from appearing in his countenance. The flush of hope, and the paleness of apprehension, alternately succeeded each other, and too manifestly declared the uneasy tumult of his thoughts. Alice trembled, looked at Alan, but continued silent.

The feast approached to a conclusion; and Maurice, arising with an air of gaiety, took up a goblet of wine and presented it to the usurper. "My Lord," cried he, "behold the cup of amity, let it go round the board," "Thou sayest well," cried Walter, "and in honour to our nephew, he and his faithful Alice shall first partake of it." So saying, he held the cup to Alan, who would have declined it in deference to Lord William, but



but Walter renewing his instances in a more pressing manner, he took it with a graceful air, and was raising it to his lips, when a sudden thought induced him to pull back his hand, and making a low obeisance to the usurper, "My Lord," said he, "I owe you an unlimited obeisance—since it is your pleasure that I drink before Lord William, I will not dispute it, but I beseech you suffer my faithful beloved Alice to taste first of this beverage. I consider her as a mother, and it is just that I pay her the respect which that name exacts."

The Action of Alan had confounded Walter, but these concluding words banished his apprehensions; he commended the idea, and bade Alice pledge him.

She had observed the perplexity of Walter, and a terrible suspicion caused the blood to chill in her veins while Alan held the goblet. She hastened to take it from him, and making a motion to put it  
to

to her lips, let it drop as if involuntarily to the floor.

The features of Walter, before fixed in suspense, became now animated with indignation. He darted a look full of fury at Alice, and, reproving her negligence in terms of asperity, rushed out of the hall.

Alan, astonished and offended, arose suddenly from his seat. "Come away mother," said he, taking Alice by the hand and pressing it. At that instant Walter re-entered with a composed air, he apologized to Alice, and condemned his own impetuosity, but offered not to prevent her retiring, and the feast broke up. Alan, though pleased with his acknowledgment, followed his nurse, and Walter dismissing Lord William and the minstrels, remained alone with Maurice.

Each regarded the other for some moments with perplexed looks, at length Walter exclaimed in a tone of vexation, "Behold the result of thy scheme!"

"Say

“ Say rather of thy own,” replied Maurice resentfully. “ Thou hast acted like a bungler,” resumed Walter, not heeding his answer. “ Thou shouldst not reproach me ;” cried the other (with a look of scorn) “ since I have not thy experience in guilt.” “ Ha ! slave-vassal,” cried Walter, “ knowest thou who I am ?” “ I do,” returned Maurice, contemptuously, “ I know thou art Walter of Fitz-Osborne—Earl *while I please.*”

Walter perceived he had gone too far. “ Let us cease recrimination,” said he, holding out his hand, “ I have been wrong, and thou too hasty. The star of Alan has for once preserved him, but we will counteract its influence.”

This submission pacified Maurice ; he took the offered hand, and their reconciliation seemed perfect. Yet, under the appearance of amity, Walter retained a deep resentment against his confederate

in



in mischief: his fears equalled his anger: he beheld in Maurice an insolent who had offended him, and a witness who could accuse him. While their hands were yet joined—while their lips renewed the confidence that had been interrupted, Walter determined within himself to destroy the instrument when the work was done.

They separated soon after, Maurice engaging to fix upon some new method which no accident should be capable of rendering abortive; and Walter with an intention to seek Alice, willing to discover by her words and looks, whether the incident of spilling the cup had proceeded from chance or suspicion.

While he held the foregoing conference with Maurice, she had retired to her apartment with young Alan.—No sooner had she entered than her limbs, feeble and tottering, ceased to sustain their weight, and she sunk on the floor, though without being deprived of sense.

Alan,

Alan, imputing her agitation to the Earl's rude treatment, sought to sooth her by his endearments : Affected by his behaviour, and still trembling for his life, she pressed him to her bosom with fervour.

“ I have thee yet,” said she, in an interrupted voice, “ dear pledge of a beloved mistress, I have thee yet in my arms !” “ Be composed, my mother,” said Alan, tenderly, “ the Earl repents of having insulted thee.” “ Ah ! would to Heaven, my child,” cried Alice, and paused.—“ What, says my mother ?” resumed he. “ Sweet Lamb !” exclaimed she, looking fondly at him, — “ Sweet Lamb, thou art surrounded by devouring wolves !—they lie in wait to destroy the springs of thy life—they would drink thy blood, and thou hast no shepherd to defend thee !” “ Say not so, mother,” returned Alan, “ thy lessons have taught me that Heaven deserts not the innocent,  
and

and in what have I offended?—Who are my enemies?—Lord William is no longer so, and I had no other.” “O Heaven,” cried she, “would his enmity was all thou had to fear!”

“Is it then the Countess that causes these apprehensions?—banish them, my mother; the Earl will not suffer her to hurt me.”

Alice, strongly affected by these words, could restrain herself no longer:—tears gushed in large torrents from her eyes, and wetted the cheek of Alan, which was joined to hers. Astonished and concerned, he saw there was something labouring in her breast, which she was unwilling to declare: though he spoke not, Alice penetrated his thoughts.—“My child,” cried she, wiping away her tears, “I read wonder and curiosity in thy looks.” “True, Mother,” replied Alan, “I would know the cause of these violent emotions which both surprize and afflict me—Some terrible secret.”

“O



“ O Heaven, how terrible !” interrupted Alice——“ One day thou shalt learn it,” added she, assuming a more composed air, “ let this promise content thee, and seek not now to discover more.—— Meanwhile, know that thou hast enemies. Trust not in the Earl ; let him remain a stranger to what I have said, however he may attempt to gain thy confidence ;— for if thou givest it him, thy destruction is sure and mine will follow. But above all, O my son, moderate that spirit, which though noble is imprudent : be less amiable if thou canst ; shroud thy graces with a veil of rusticity, so shalt thou become rather an object of indifference, than of envy or of fear.” “ My beloved child,” continued she, “ embracing him, despise not my cautions ; follow them, and they will at once ensure thy security, and my repose.”

“ O my mother,” cried Alan, finding she ceased to speak, “ thy words have redoubled

redoubled my perplexity, but I respect them, and will obey thee in all things, save dissimulation. The Earl shall not learn what I have heard—but I will not seem otherwise than as I am.”

“Noble and virtuous boy!” exclaimed Alice, in a sudden transport, “thou givest a lesson to grey hairs; I blush for instructing thee to dissimble. No, continue to be what thou art—for thou canst never cease to be lovely, and the care of Heaven!”

In speaking these words she loaded him with caresses, and again bidding him beware of indulging the Earl’s curiosity, they parted a few moments before Walter came to seek them.

He approached Alice with a smiling air, and renewed his apologies. “Cease, my Lord,” cried she, “to oppress me with your goodness; it becomes not a lowly domestic to require humiliation from her master. It is I who should sue  
for

for pardon, since by my negligence the harmony of the feast was disturbed." She spoke these words in so natural a manner, that even Walter was deceived. He gave over all thoughts of farther scrutiny, and well pleased not to have incurred suspicion, suffered her to leave him.

That night, as the two preceding, he reposed in the Countess's apartment, and sleep for a short time visited his eye-lids. He was awaked by a fearful and discordant crash, which induced him for a moment to imagine that the roof had fallen on his head. He started, and stirred the Countess, but she continued in a deep slumber; finding her immoveable, he thought of Matilda, and shuddered.

Immediately a sudden light illuminated the chamber, and the phantom stood beside him. The fire of indignation shot from her eyes;—she drew forth the dagger from her bosom, and holding it over the head of Walter, cried in a terrible  
and



and menacing voice—"Behold thy fate!" At the same instant some drops of blood seemed to fall from the blade upon his breast. Seized with horror, he attempted to shake them off, and the phantom assumed a smile of scorn.

"Thou fearest not to shed blood," said she, "yet shrinkest at the sight; but know that thy own shall flow!" In saying thus, she again shook the dagger, a fresh stream poured from its point, the light gave place to darkness, and he saw no more.

At that moment his spouse awoke, she felt him tremble with such violence as shook the couch, and enquired if he was indisposed?

"Didst thou not see the blood!" cried he, grasping her hand. "Call back thy senses," said the Countess, "they wander." "Sleep not," exclaimed he in a tone of horror, "I charge thee—sleep not!"

The Countess now apprehending him in a state of distraction, called loudly to her women who lay in the antichamber. "I am not mad," cried he, guessing her thoughts, "though I have seen enough to unhinge my soul;—speak not—enquire not—lest the blood congeal in thy veins—lest thou turn into very stone!"

The Countess now caught the terrors of her husband: the loud and repeated shrieks she uttered soon filled the chamber with attendants. Amongst the rest came Alice and young Alan.

Walter, on seeing the latter, set forth a piercing cry, and covered his face.—Then suddenly raising his head, and fixing his eyes on Alan, he exclaimed in a frantic tone—"Whither dost thou come?—I did not kill her!—she rushed upon the dagger's point!"

These words struck Alan with surprise. The action of his nurse redoubled it. Thrown off her guard by the tenor of the scene,

scene, she fell suddenly upon her knees. "My mistress—my beloved mistress," cried she,—"accursed be thy murderer!"

Fortunately this exclamation was alone overheard by Alan; the Countess and her domestics being busied about Walter, who had fallen into a strong convulsion.

Alice seeing her imprudence in the countenance of her charge, (who regarded his uncle with menacing glances) quickly arose, and taking him by the hand, besought him to quit the apartment. Her entreaties had the force of commands with Alan; they retired together.

As they entered her chamber, he fell at her feet and embraced her knees:—"My mother," cried he, in a beseeching tone, "my mother by affection, and by gratitude, wilt thou not name the murderer of her who gave me life?"

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At



At that question Alice turned pale:—She would have spoken, but the words died upon her tongue.—Her lips quivered—her limbs shook, she burst into a flood of tears, and threw herself on Alan's neck.

Alarmed by her agitation, and unwilling to encrease it, he renewed not the enquiry, but his countenance expressed perplexity and concern. His silence restored Alice to some degree of composure, but she dreaded its short continuance. A thought struck her, which she determined to put in execution.

Alan had arisen, and she suddenly assumed her former posture. “Child of my love,” cried she, resisting his endeavours to raise her, “Child of my love, and of my hopes, behold me at thy feet—see the drops of anguish in mine eye—give thine ear to the supplication of my heart, and restore it to repose!” “Dear mother,” interrupted Alan, “why this adju-

adjuration? Can I be disobedient—is not thy will my own?" "Cease urging me to divulge what thou canst not know without incurring thy destruction," returned Alice, "and I accept that forbearance, as the best proof of thy obedience."

"Most difficult the proof!"—cried Alan, "but I give it thee my mother. Arise, and shame me no longer with this posture of humiliation."

The eyes of Alice sparkled.—She arose, caught him to her breast, and imprinted a thousand kisses on his cheek. Their endearments were interrupted by a domestic, who informed them of the Earl's being seized with a delirium, in which, amongst many incoherencies, he made often mention of Alan and Matilda. Alan started, and took three steps to the door. But Alice following quick, caught his arm—"Stay, my child,"—cried she, with a supplicating accent,—

“I myself will go to the Earl’s apartment; do thou await my return.”

Without staying for an answer, she pursued her purpose, but was denied admittance by the Countess.

The wild ravings of Walter had disclosed to that lady some part of a mystery which had of late perplexed her. Affection to her husband had long ceased, but she now knew enough to tremble for her own interest, and that of Lord William. Not satisfied with excluding Alice, she permitted no person to remain in the apartment, but one woman, whom she imagined attached to her by principle and affection. Yet she was here deceived. A character such as hers could not inspire the latter, and her own conduct precluded the former in her attendants. The affectation of virtue, which she now assumed, and which manifested itself chiefly in defamation, kept the fault of her youth still alive to remembrance;  
and



and while her domestics despised her for the one, they detested her for the other.

Walter continued in a delirium the whole of that night, and some part of the following day. Notwithstanding the orders given that his indisposition should be kept secret, the rumour reached Maurice, and he forced his way into the chamber of the usurper, just as he had returned to his senses. The Countess would have prevented him from approaching the couch of Walter, but he, in a faint voice, and making a motion with his hand, bade him draw near, and desired all others to quit the room.

When Maurice found himself without witnesses, assuming the voice and looks of a person who had some pleasure to communicate, he informed Walter that he had now fixed upon a method to rid him of all apprehension.

The usurper understood him ; but far from displaying any token of joy, his countenance took a paler hue, and his eyes, before sunk and spiritless, now gleamed with frenzy and horror. He clasped his hands twice, and then pulling Maurice towards him, whispered in his ear—"The blood of Matilda speaks—it guards the life of Alan!"

Maurice drew back astonished;—he imagined the delirium returned, and was going to call for assistance. Walter stopped him:—"Listen to my words," cried he, "I do not rave,—Attempt not the life of Alan!—this was the injunction of Matilda, and it is mine also."

The Countess entered at that instant, and Maurice retired from the couch, impressed with wonder. But it was not of long duration; after musing some time, he imagined that the words he had heard sprung from the imbecillity of disease; and concluded, that returning health

health would prove this to be a temporary change.

The disposition of Walter rendered the idea reasonable, but in the present instance it was not just. He recovered his strength in a few days, yet terror still possessed his soul, and harrassed his private moments.

The form of Matilda, the blood dropping from the dagger, haunted his imagination; his days were spent in restlessness, and his nights in fears. Things in themselves inanimate, added to his terrors; every passing breeze seemed to bear the wailings of complaining ghosts, every rustling leaf was transformed into a spectre by his tortured fancy. But above all, the sight of Alan tormented him; superstition prevented him from forming any new machination against his life, yet he ceased not to wish his death. Religion would have taught repentance, but Walter knew not religion. Hail! thou



first gift of Heaven — thou softener of human calamities! may my heart never swerve from thy dictates, nor my bosom want thy consolation. Thou scatterest roses in the thorny path of adversity; — the pale children of distress, roused by thy cheering accents lift up their heads and smile!

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

BOOK

## BOOK THE SECOND.

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**W**ALTER, at this time, besides the terrors of imagination, had other apprehensions to struggle with. These were caused by the partiality of the King for William de Valence, whom he loaded with every honour it was in his power to bestow.

Walter dreaded that his long stay in the castle had erased him from the remembrance of Henry, and made way for the new favourite to his affections. He heard with pleasure, that De Valence was the object of general detestation, and a rising hope that his own presence was  
alone

alone necessary to crush him for ever, determined him to revisit the court speedily. He pursued his intention, and was well received; but discovered that his fears were better grounded than his hopes, since it was manifest though the King seemed pleased with his presence, he gave him but the second place in his affections.

The late and the present favourite regarded each other with jealousy and distrust. Hatred succeeded, and while De Valence sought to ruin Walter in the opinion of the King, he again tried every method in his power to render his adversary the object of universal dislike.

The behaviour of Valence forwarded the design of his enemy; attached not by birth to the nation he oppressed, its complaints affected him neither with compassion or remorse. Henry, meantime, approved of all his measures, and concurred in all his steps.

This



This shameful preference, joined with many illegal evasions of justice, at length totally alienated from that monarch, the love, and even the respect of his subjects. Their secret wishes and their open clamours pointed to Simon Monfort, Earl of Leicester, as the only person who could save the state, and render the people happy.

That crafty noble only waited for the signal. He was son to the famous general who had commanded against the Albigenses of Savoy, and had formed an alliance with the throne, by marrying the widow of Lord Pembroke, sister to Henry.

His power, though great, was equalled by his address. All ranks of people, allured by his affability, or won by his promises, looked up to him as their deliverer from oppression.

Sensible of his influence, he disdained to cultivate the favour of the King, whose person he hated, and whose conduct he despised.

despised. Nay, so little did he court his friendship, or dread his enmity, that once when Henry called him traitor, he dared to give his sovereign the lie, and proceeded so far as to tell him, that did he not possess that sacred name, he would oblige him to repent the insult.

But the character of Leicester was mistaken, far from seeking to redress the wrongs of the people, he only wished for an opportunity to tyrannize over them with impunity. He had long, though secretly, aspired to the throne, and knew the surest method to obtain his desire was to decry the government of Henry. He accordingly filled all places with complaints of his partiality, injustice, and incapacity.

These complaints were too well founded to prove ineffectual. The blaze of public indignation, a long time smothered, burst forth now in all its fury, and answered his expectations.

Walter

Walter was not ignorant of Leicester's machinations, but his hatred of William De Valence induced him rather to forward than prevent them. Yet he meant not to desert the party of the King, sensible that his own behaviour had ill merited the affection of the people: but he flattered himself, that if the favourite were once removed his own power might balance that of Leicester. In these sentiments, and with this design, he courted the esteem of Montfort, and to convince him of his attachment, gave him secret notice of the suspicions of Valence, and the fears of Henry.

The project of Leicester, now ripe for execution, was hastened by the counsel of his pretended associate. He called a meeting of the most considerable barons, and concealing his ambition under the mask of public virtue, represented to them the necessity of reforming the state. He exaggerated the violation of their privileges,



leges, the continued plunder of the clergy, the oppressions of the commonalty, and the perfidy of the King. His eloquence, aided by his popularity, and his power had its due weight. The barons entered into a resolution of redressing public grievances, by taking the administration into their own hands.

Walter was made acquainted with this determination, and began to tremble for the event. Sensible that his power depended upon the King's, his first impulse was to give him intelligence of the conspiracy. But fortunately for Montfort, the hated idea of Valence recurred to his imagination, and prevented the disclosure. A new insult from his enemy, still more determined him against it.

De Valence secretly accused the Lord De Gray of treasonable practices towards his sovereign, and Henry, ever open to calumny, believed the matter to be true. Actuated by this belief, he caused the  
castle

castle of the suspected noble to be invested, and his person seized.

Walter, on learning the misfortune of his father-in-law, complained to the king, but his remonstrances had no effect, and he experienced the further mortification of hearing William De Valence caution him to take heed that his own loyalty was free from stain. This hint, rendered still more cutting by its truth, and by a supercilious smile which he observed on the countenance of the King, struck deep to his heart: he perceived that his influence over Henry was lost, and that of the present favourite secure.

This conviction made him renew his instances to the disaffected party, to hasten the execution of their design. But Leicester was spurred on by the higher motive of ambition and the certainty of success.

At the ensuing parliament, the confederates appeared habited in compleat armour.

armour. The King on his entrance inquired their intention : they replied, to make him their sovereign by confirming his power, and to have their grievances redressed.

Henry, too sensible of his own weakness to refuse, and too well acquainted with deceit to hesitate in giving a promise he meant not to observe, readily assured them of every satisfaction they desired ; and for that purpose summoned another parliament at Oxford to digest a new plan of government.

The adverse party, well acquainted with his duplicity, placed some of their own body about him 'till the time of meeting. This caution prevented the arts of De Valence from taking effect, and he began to entertain the most terrible apprehensions for the safety of his person.

Walter beheld his anxiety with joy, and imagined his destruction sure ; he  
secretly



secretly entreated Leicester to let the removal of William De Valence from the counsels of the King, be the first requisition of the barons, and he was assured of compliance. But his intended victim saved himself by a precipitate retreat to the continent, before the parliament assembled.

The King, now without resource, found himself obliged to perform his engagement. The parliament met, and its first step was investing twenty four barons with supreme authority to reform the abuses of the state, and placing Leicester at the head of this body.

They then proceeded to make some regulations of real utility to the kingdom. They ordained that four knights should be chosen by each county, who should examine into the grievances of their respective constituents, and attend at the ensuing parliament to declare them.

They

They commanded that three sessions of parliament should be held each year; that a new high sheriff should be annually elected; that no wards or castles should be intrusted to foreigners; no new forests made, nor the revenues of the counties let to farm.

These constitutions were in truth consonant to justice, but the authors were deceitful: it was not the security of the people, but the establishment of their own power that they designed to effect: instead of relinquishing their authority when the business of their appointment was fulfilled, they studied to continue it by various pretences and delays.

Walter beheld with grief his artifices harmless to his enemy and hurtful to himself; he saw the power of the King undermined, and his own of consequence subverted. There were few of the governing barons, who, during the height of his influence, had not been insulted  
by

by his pride, or injured by his rapacity. From them therefore, he could expect neither confidence or favour. Leicester himself ceased to care for him, when his services were no longer required.

Stung with shame and indignation, he desired permission to retire to his castle, and the request was granted without hesitation.

The pursuits of ambition and revenge now gave way to the gloomy horrors that had before oppressed him. He trembled at the sight of his usurped habitation.—His knees stiffened as he passed the moat, and fancy ever busy in tormenting him, presented to his deluded eyes a thousand fleeting and tremendous images.

His absence had given no regret, and his arrival caused no joy. The Countess advanced to meet him, with a cold and unconcerned countenance, Lord William followed her steps, and betrayed equal indifference.

But



But the features of Alan, who advanced last, were not expressive of insensibility. Not forgetful of the words of Alice, he regarded Walter with an aspect of mingled distrust and horror.

The usurper was too much occupied by his own sensations to heed those of others. Observing a fixed and gloomy silence, he walked into the castle, nor could the reiterated enquiries of the Countess oblige him to speak.

From that moment, melancholy and distrust pervaded the mansion of Fitz-Osborne. The harps of the minstrels no more vibrated the sounds of pleasure; unstrung and useless they were now affixed to the walls of the solitary hall, once the seat of smiling joy and innocent festivity.

The gloomy shade of the dwelling took its colour from the master. Walter now felt the just reward of guilt; every dire sensation had taken its abode in his bosom,

som, and the acute stings of conscience pierced him without remission or allay.

The rising perfections of Alan, the beauties of his person, the graces of his deportment, and the virtues of his heart, added to the usurper's pangs. Tormented by envy, by suspicion, and by fear, his days passed on, unmarked by any pleasurable emotion, and expecting no future joy.

Such are the gifts of vice to her votaries. Avoid her, ye children of humanity—enter not into her devious footsteps; the path is flowery, but deceitful. Pleasure seems to gild its opening glades, but a frightful and tremendous abyss terminates the prospect!

At the end of three years, Walter was roused from his state of painful inactivity, by the call of ambition. The four and twenty barons had maintained themselves during that time in an usurped authority, and committed many outrages  
on

on the rights of the people.—Henry wholly in their power, gave a sanction to their actions.

All true lovers of their country beheld with indignation an odious and oppressive oligarchy, undermining the very vitals of the constitution. But it was reserved for an order, which they themselves had introduced into the state, to be the first in opposition.

The knights of the shire, now regularly assembled in a separate house, boldly remonstrated against their usurpations.—They represented, that though the King had performed what was required of him, the barons had been deficient in their engagement; that to increase their own interest and power, seemed the sole purpose of their decrees; and finally called upon the King's eldest son, prince Edward, to interpose his authority and save the sinking nation.

They



They had fixed upon a deliverer, whom Providence and Nature had rendered worthy of the charge. He had attained that age which passes youth and commences manhood, and the nobleness of his sentiments well corresponded with the dignity of his birth.

To a form manly and graceful he joined attractive manners and a virtuous soul. Courage, wisdom and fortitude, were the inmates of his breast, and piety untainted with superstition gave a lustre to the whole.—The people admired his qualities, and idolized his person. He was entitled the Delight of Mankind, and the Hope of England!

The insolence and usurpations of the barons had filled him with a just indignation, and he hesitated not to answer the universal call.

He alledged, when appealed to, that he had sworn to the constitutions of Oxford, which, though contrary to his pri-

vate sentiments, he meant not to infringe—at the same time he sent a message to the barons, requiring them to lay down their authority, or to expect a vigorous opposition.

They replied, by publishing a new code of laws, which, though containing nothing of real utility, was calculated to dazzle the undiscerning multitude. In this manner, by studied and illusive pretences, they continued to maintain themselves in power, notwithstanding the loud clamours of the nation. The Pope himself beheld their usurpations with anger, and absolved the King, and his subjects, from the oath they had taken, to observe the provisions of Oxford.

Walter, apprized of these commotions, hastened to Prince Edward, and urged him to accept the offer of his people, by becoming their leader.

Sensible that his former treachery was not unknown to Henry, he hoped to obliterate

literature it from his memory by his present zeal. With this view, he sent orders to his vassals to provide themselves with military array, and bade Lord William join him speedily.

When this mandate reached the castle, Alan flew to his nurse, and informing her of the news, declared his intention to accompany Lord William.

“O my child,” returned Alice, shuddering, “the tenderness of thy youth is no match for the toils of war.”

“What, mother,” cried he with vivacity, “shall I waste my hours in idle ease, while my countrymen obey the call of honour?—No—the son of Fitz-Osborne will emulate his glory—he will tread in the path of renown—he will assist his country and his King!”—“Yes,” cried Alice, in a tone of transport, “thou art the true offspring of Fitz-Osborne.—thou inheritest his valour—mayest thou never meet his fate!” A sad recollection



now changed her voice; she bent her knees to the ground—"O God," cried she, faltering, "preserve this beloved pledge of noble parents! Protect him in the heat of the battle—unnerve the arms of his enemies—let their shafts play harmless around him."

"My mother, I will pray too," said Alan, kneeling beside her.—"Eternal Being," added he, in a fervent voice, "bless the faithful guardian of my youth, and ease her terrors for my safety. Give strength to my arm, and success to my sword, but above all, endue me with the power of dispensing happiness to her, who for mine has laid the surest foundation, by causing my dependance on thee."

The piety, and the affection of her charge, inspired Alice with raptures. She embraced him tenderly and arose—"Go, my child," cried she, "inform the contents of thy determination, and may almighty guide thy steps!"

Lord

Con-  
the Alm.

Lord William manifested some displeasure on learning the resolution of his kinsman, but as the Earl had given no injunctions to the contrary, he knew it was to no purpose to resist.

Two days after, Alan and Lord William, attended by some trusty domestics, departed from the castle. They arrived at Winchester, the fourth morning from setting out.

Walter advanced to meet his son, and was struck with astonishment and dismay at seeing Alan. He received him coldly, but disguised his mortification. The Prince heard of their arrival, and desired Walter to conduct them to his presence. He obeyed with reluctance.

Lord William advanced first, and Edward, neither struck by his person or address, made him a slight inclination of his head, and passed on towards Alan, whose appearance prepossessed him in his favour.

These two young kinsmen, were indeed as different in bodily endowments, as in disposition.

The person of Lord William was ill-shaped, and awkward: his features expressive of meanness and stupidity.

The form of Alan at once denoted agility and strength—his stature was tall, his limbs finely proportioned, and his mien most graceful. His black eyes sparkled with vivacity, and his lips wore the hue of health. A profusion of dark brown hair, fell in easy ringlets on his shoulders, while a stray lock wantoned on his ruddy cheek.

He bent one knee to the Prince, who regarded him with a look of admiration, and demanded his name and parentage.

“I am the son of Alan Fitz-Osborne,” answered he, “unhappy by my birth, but fortunate in the notice of your highness.”

“And thy purpose?”—resumed Edward with a smile.

“To



To devote my sword and my life to the service of my Prince," replied the son of Fitz-Osborne.

"I accept them, my young associate," said Edward, raising him with an air of kindness.

Walter bit his lips and the indignation of his soul was redoubled, when he beheld the Prince lead his nephew into an inner apartment, with an intention of introducing him to his consort. He followed their steps in silent anguish.

"Partner of my life," said the Prince to Eleanor, "I present to thee a youth, who is worthy of thy favour." "He bears indeed the semblance of worth," returned the Princess, giving her hand to Alan, with a smile of benignity. He pressed it respectfully to his lips, and prostrating himself at her feet, "When Alan," said he "shall cease to be grateful for the condescension of his Princess, then may he cease to exist!"

F 4

"Thou

“Thou art a noble youth,” said Eleonora, “arise—thou shalt be my knight.” “Sacred trust,” cried the son of Fitz-Osborne, “I will discharge it with my blood!”

Walter, though tortured by rage and envy, seemed transported with this scene. He turned to Alan, with a smile of dissembled pleasure, and congratulating him on his good fortune, cautioned him to deserve its continuance.

“I fear him not,” said the Prince, “the virtue of his soul is written in legible characters on his countenance, and those shall be my security.”

Walter unable to restrain his resentment any longer, and yet willing to conceal it, passed abruptly out of the apartment, followed by his son.

Not daring to insult the object who had incurred his anger, he vented it upon Lord William, and after reproaching him severely for suffering Alan to bear him

him company to Winchester, commanded him to return to the castle the following day.

Lord William, answered in a fullen tone, that since he had been at the trouble of attending him, he would continue where he was.

This reply encreased the rage of Walter beyond all bounds. He cursed the day that had given birth to so disobedient a son, and again commanded him on his peril to observe the order he had given.

His words and looks terrified Lord William into submission, but he muttered some words of revenge against Alan, which the usurper overheard, and secretly rejoiced at. We have already said, that though he dreaded to attempt the life of his nephew, he ceased not to wish his death. The idea therefore, that this object of his hate might be destroyed by any other efforts than his own, filled him with a base joy, and he vainly flattered



himself, that by not participating the action, he might escape the punishment. Actuated by these thoughts, he neither encouraged Lord William to the perpetration of his threats, or forbade him the execution. Next morn, Lord William quitted Winchester, and Edward prepared to assert his father's rights.

Numbers daily flocked to his standard. Those barons who still maintained their loyalty unblemished, joined him with their dependants, and to compleat the good fortune of the royal party, Henry escaped from his pretended friends to Winchester.

The governing barons now found they had vigorous measures to expect, and determined to oppose them with the same. A body of forces was detached to surprize Winchester, but the vigilance of Edward d appointed them. They were repulsed with loss and disgrace.

Alan signalized his valour in this first encounter : led on by the impetuosity of youth,

youth, and the thirst of glory, he pierced through the rebel ranks, and seizing their standard, bore it off in spite of opposition. The enemy, struck by the fire of his eyes, and the gallantry of his deportment, made way for him involuntarily. But their commander, Adam Gordon, loudly upbraiding their pusillanimity, advanced fiercely towards him, and a furious combat ensued.

Edward, hearing the danger of his young friend, hastened to his relief. The battle now raged more fiercely than ever, but the royal party quickly obliged the rebels to seek safety in flight.

Alan, who still grasped the standard, now threw it at the Prince's feet.—  
“Thus,” cried he exultingly, “may all the adversaries of my Prince be humbled.”

“Brave youth!” cried Edward, embracing him, “from this moment I take charge of thy fortunes, thou art the brother of my soul.”

“May

"May I," cried Alan, bending one knee, "deserve the appellation.

"Thou must—thou wilt!" returned Edward, raising him, "but come—my Eleanora shall learn the exploits of her champion." In saying these words, he bade Alan mount his horse, and obliged him to ride beside him into the town.

Walter, who had continued within the walls, beheld their approach, and perceived they held familiar converse.—

That sight afflicted him with a thousand pangs; he had indulged a hope that his nephew would have fallen a victim to the rashness of his courage; and the certainty of his safety, joined to the evident favour of the Prince, finished the measure of his anguish, however a skilled adept in hypocrisy, he concealed his agonies, and affected to partake in the general satisfaction.

A parliament was now called, and the King resumed his former authority, the  
barons.



barons submitted to what they dared not oppose, and the people looked forward to an end of their calamities.

Leicester, mean time, not discouraged by the bad success of his enterprise, resolved upon entirely annihilating that power he had already humbled. Llewellyn, the hereditary and assured foe of the English, presented himself as a proper ally. He entered into a confederacy with this Prince, and engaged him to invade England with a body of thirty thousand Welch.

Their treaty was yet a secret, and the court gave itself up to rejoicing and festivity. One day, during this time, a young peasant desired to speak in private with the son of Fitz-Osborne.

It was Gerald—the innocent cause of his quarrel with Lord William, and of the usurper's machinations.

The youth prostrated himself at Alan's feet ; “ My noble master,” cried he,  
“ the

“ the poor Gerald bleſſer heaven for giving him now the power of requiting thy generoſity.” In ſaying this, he preſented him with a paper : it was from Alice, and contained theſe words :

“ My ſon, there are ſnares ſet for thee—the Almighty has yet preſerved thy precious life, may he continue his protection, Gerald will tell thee all.”

Alan, with a countenance where perplexity, not fear, bore ſway, raiſed the kneeling youth, and bade him diſcloſe the myſtery.

Gerald informed him, that in returning from the foreſt a few days before, at the cloſe of evening, with a burden of wood, he had heard the name of Alan pronounced in a reſentful tone, by a voice which he diſtinguiſhed to be that of Lord William. Struck by the ſound, he ſtopped, and concealing himſelf behind ſome thick underwood, ſhortly perceived he had not been miſtaken. Lord William advanced

accom-

accompanied by the domestic who attended his person. From the former he heard these words: "Bertram," said he, "dissuade not but obey me—shall a base born stripling ravish those honours, and those favours which are my right?—No, the minion of Edward shall rue his presumption in his blood!" "But the Earl," interrupted his companion. "Fear not his resentment," answered Lord William, "though I know not from what motive he caresses Alan, yet I can see his kindness is constrained. Was not his resentment against me occasioned by suffering this minion to bear me company to court? Nay more, my threats were conceived in terms too plain to leave him in ignorance of my intention, yet he dissuaded me not."

This assurance seemed to satisfy Bertram. He assented to what his Lord desired, and both then proceeded farther into the forest to concert, as they said, proper



proper means for the execution. Gerald fearing discovery if he followed, arose from his hiding-place, and carried home his burden. Next morn he communicated to Alice what he had overheard, and she trembling with apprehension, dispatched him immediately to Winchester.

This was the sum of Gerald's intelligence. Alan betrayed no symptom of dread at the information, but thanked the youth, and promised to reward his zeal. "Talk not of reward, my noble master," returned he, "I ask no other than devoting my life to thy service. Gerald will quit thee no more, if thou dost not spurn him from thee." "Spurn thee, faithful creature!" cried Alan with glistening eyes, "base indeed were my heart, if I could spurn thee!—No, generous youth, we will never part—thou shalt share the destiny of a master, who is himself dependant."

Gerald kissed his hand with a look of acknowledgment, and tears of pleasure streamed

streamed down his cheeks. From that moment they were inseparable; and he ceased not to watch the steps of Alan with unremitting care.

The security of the court was soon disturbed, by the intelligence of L'lewellyn's invasion, and of Montfort's joining him with a body of forces.

Before the Prince could take proper measures to oppose them, a great part of the kingdom suffered from their licentious devastations. But Edward did not long continue idle. The ravagers were defeated in some skirmishes, and victorious in others.

The son of Fitz-Osborne maintained the reputation he had acquired in his first encounter, by successive acts of valour, and the prudence and wisdom of his conduct, equally evinced, induced Edward to intrust him with the charge of an enterprise, which seemed calculated for riper years.

This

This was to attack a fortress, which was suspected to contain the wife and daughter of Leicester.

His success justified the Prince's choice. After an assault which was bravely opposed, he drew out the defenders of the castle by a pretended flight: then turning precipitately, the pursuers became the pursued, and his party entered the gates promiscuously with the enemy.

The cries of the vanquished, filled the Countess of Leicester with the most terrible apprehensions; but the sight of the victor, his extreme youth, and noble air, changed her fear into admiration! "We are your prisoners," said she, falling at his feet with her daughter, "but we trust in your clemency." Gertrude Montfort cast a timid glance at the young hero, but spoke not.

Alan, hastening to take them from that posture of humiliation, assured them of honourable treatment. His accents sunk  
into



into the soul of Gertrude; she cast another glance towards him, and blessed her captivity.

Alan felt only the emotions of humanity and benevolence. He reiterated his promise of protection, gave orders for their being served, and attended as before, and placing a garrison of his own soldiers in the fortress, returned to Winchester with his meaner prisoners.

Five days had served for his expedition. Edward scarcely convinced of his good fortune by the sight of the captives, could not repress his astonishment or his pleasure. The modesty of Alan's deportment heightened his admiration; he led him triumphantly to his consort, and Walter experienced new torments.

But Allan's gallant treatment of the Countess, inspired him with a sudden hope of turning it to his disadvantage. Impelled by this idea, he went into the apartment of the King, whose old prejudices

judices in his favour had returned. Accustomed to lavish his affections on the unworthy, he even held him in stricter confidence than before.

Walter related to him his nephew's success, with apparent pleasure, and hidden malice.

He extolled his bravery, but condemned his imprudence, in permitting the Countess to continue in a place from whence Leicester could deliver her with ease.

Henry, struck by the hint, sent for the Prince. Edward entered, full of Alan's praises. The King demanded whether the Countess of Leicester, and her daughter, had been brought to Winchester. Edward gave a negative reply.

"Then—" cried the King, "Montfort will deliver his wife, and we shall lose the fruits of this boasted success."

"No, my Lord," returned the Prince, "our young victor has for the present provided

provided against that event, and I will take care of the future."

Henry, easily swayed to opposite opinions, took that of his Son, till he retired from his presence. Walter then renewed his insinuations; he represented, that even supposing the Prince's confidence to be founded in justice, the Countess's captivity would not give Leicester any pain, nor incline him to any accommodation, while he was sensible she was treated with honour, and unsubjected to insult.

This consideration weighed with the fickle Henry. He again required the Prince's attendance, and informed him of his determination to have his noble captive brought to Winchester and committed to the gloom of a dungeon.

The generous soul of Edward started with abhorrence; "Can my father and my King," cried he, "commit an action, which would disgrace his dignity and violate the rights of humanity?"

Henry



Henry, more open to suspicion and fear, than to gallantry or generosity, heard his son with an unmov'd aspect, and repeated his orders.

The Prince, mindful of duty though filled with shame, bent his head in token of obedience, and sought Alan, to whom he told what had passed.

"O heaven!" cried the youth, "will my Prince, will Edward suffer such a breach of the laws of honour and of virtue?"

"Thy sovereign and mine commands it," returned the Prince, "we will obey him in carrying the Countess to Winchester, but we will treat her with observance and respect."

That promise pacified Alan in some measure, but he could not think of the Countess's suspecting him of falsehood without the sincerest grief.

Walter, who had hoped to effect Alan's ruin by promoting a quarrel between  
tween

tween Henry and his son, was mortified at the Prince's submission. He attempted again to fan the flame of contention, but without success, Edward's filial duty counteracting all his insinuations.

Montfort's wife and daughter were brought to Winchester, and committed to close durance. At the instance of Walter, (notwithstanding Edward's promise and Alan's solicitude) they were treated with every degree of contumely and insult which the wantonness of power and barbarity could inflict.

Edward now concealed not his indignation, nor Alan his grief, but both were useless in softening the captivity of these unhappy persons.

Some evenings after this event, Alan walked without the walls of Winchester, accompanied by Gerald, to whom he imparted his sorrow and his confusion, at the imprisonment of Montfort's family.

While they were so employed, the sound of hasty footsteps made them turn  
their

their heads, and they perceived four men armed with battle-axes, approaching them.

Alan at first imagined they might be some soldiers from the town, and meant to let them pass; but Gerald perceiving Bertram, the confidant of Lord William, exclaimed in a loud voice, "treachery! base treachery!" and put himself in a posture of defence by the side of his master.

Alan now drew his sword, and waited the assailants with a resolute air.

Bertram, advancing, lifted up his heavy battle axe with an intention of cleaving Alan to the middle, but a well-directed stroke from Gerald laid the hand and the weapon harmless on the earth.

The maimed Bertram sunk down with the anguish of his wound, and Alan quickly seizing his adversary's axe, and aiming a furious blow at one of the three (who now assaulted him together) laid him senseless at his feet.

The



The two remaining ruffians staggered back astonished ; Alan perceived their confusion, and redoubled his strokes. Gerald, animated by the danger of his master, exerted himself valiantly, and the assailants were obliged to give way.

At the same instant both threw down their weapons and betook themselves to flight with the rapidity of a roe who hears the cries of the hunters.

Alan and his companion pursued them, but without effect. They then returned and found Bertram restored to sense, and writhing in agony. The blood which had ceased to flow during his swoon, now streamed so fast that they apprehended his speedy dissolution.

Alan, struck with compassion, tore off some of his garments and bound up the wound. Gerald, tender-hearted on other occasions, was now obdurate. "Suffer the miscreant to die," cried he, in an angry tone, "he would have destroyed]

thee; why shouldest thou seek to preserve him?"

"True," said Bertram in a weak voice, "I would have destroyed him, but I am only the instrument of another's guilt. If life is spared me," continued he, turning to Alan, "I will unfold to thine ear an iniquitous plot, and though the disclosure cannot exculpate me, it may serve to guard thee against future attempts." At these words he fell into another swoon.

Gerald, now interested in his recovery, assisted Alan in restoring him to life; they succeeded, and supported him into the town.

Edward met them while they were thus employed. Filled with anxiety for his young associate, whose garments were spotted with blood, and his hair dishevelled, he demanded what had happened?

Alan, from a principle of generosity, would have declined accusing his kinsman;

man; but Gerald, who was swayed by no such motives, instantly related the declaration of the wounded Bertram, and called upon him to execute his promise. The Prince seconded this command.

The trembling culprit, weighed down with all the horrors of guilt, and the oppression of pain, implored him to respite the relation till the ensuing morn, when he would prepare to obey him. Alan added his entreaties for the same purpose; and much against the will of Gerald the Prince complied.

Bertram was now borne to an apartment in the Palace, which he had no sooner entered, than another fainting fit seized him, and he breathed no more.

This event inspired Gerald with Anger and vexation; he poured strong cordials down the throat of the lifeless Bertram, shook his corse with violence, and called repeatedly on his name. Alan reminding him of the impotence of these attempts,



turned from the scene with a mixture of pity and horror.

An account of his domestic's treachery reached Walter, at the same moment with that of his decease. More disappointed by the frustration of the one, than afflicted at the other, he even regarded this last event as an instance of good fortune. Bertram might have disclosed some dangerous secrets, which he flattered himself were for ever hidden by his demise.

In this confidence he sought his nephew, and found him in the apartment of Eleanora, engaged in an earnest discourse with her and the Prince.

Walter, counterfeiting the most violent emotions of joy, ran towards Alan, and falling on his neck, uttered a thousand incoherent congratulations. The Prince, deceived by his dissimulation, gave him credit for a virtue to which he was a stranger; but Alan, recollecting the words  
of

of Alice, and the disclosure of Gerald, received his felicitations with an air of coldness and distrust.

Too intent on giving the appearance of kindness to the sensations of malice and regret, Walter heeded not the countenance of his nephew, but secretly applauded his own art.

The attention of Edward was soon called off to a matter that more nearly concerned him. A courier arrived from London with letters from the Queen, his mother.

These informed him, that Fitz-Richard, the mayor of London, favoured the party of Leicester, and had already taken some steps to promote his interest. The Queen added, that she was hourly in apprehension from the insults of a rude and licentious rabble, who loudly reproached her as one of the first movers of the King's bad administration, and she implored her son to hasten to her relief.

G 3

Edward

Edward immediately carried these letters to the King, and representing that the partizans of Leicester would certainly revenge the treatment of his Countess on the defenceless Queen, besought him to mitigate the severity of her imprisonment. Henry yielded to his persuasion, and the Prince hastened to impart the news to the son of Fitz-Osborne, who, filled with joy, would himself bear it to the Countess.

The signet of Henry obtained him admittance to the dungeon. But what shame and indignation seized his generous soul, on beholding the situation of that unfortunate lady. From the bare and gloomy walls of the prison, issued a damp and noxious vapour, and the scanty light of a grated casement, added new horrors to the scene.

The Countess, pale and emaciated, supported by her weeping daughter, reclined on a bundle of straw, at once  
her



her couch and her carpet. At the creaking of the rusty hinges, Gertrude raised her streaming eyes.—

“O Heaven!” cried she, grasping her mother’s hand, “it is Alan—it is our conqueror!”

The Countess turned her head, and beheld the son of Fitz-Osborne standing in an attitude of woe. “Is not the vengeance of Henry yet gratified?” cried she, in a feeble voice, “does he send thee to inflict new cruelties?”

At these words, Alan sprung forward, and casting himself at her feet, sobbed audibly. “My mother, his soul is gentle,” cried Gertrude, “he mourns our injuries.”

“O God!” exclaimed Alan, “would I could expiate them with my heart’s best blood! Noble and respected lady,” continued he, embracing the Countess’s knees, “diddst thou see my emotions—wert thou sensible of my confusion at this

fight, thou wouldst extend to me some part of that pity, which is due to thy own sufferings—but I come to lead thee from this habitation of despair—the King commands thy release.”

“What!” interrupted the Countess, with an incredulous air, “can the tyrant relent?—Can he have changed barbarity for compassion?”

“It is even so,” replied Alan, “behold the signet of Henry.” “Pardon me, youth,” said the Countess, “if I hesitate in believing thee. He who has loaded the family of Leicester with such accumulated indignities—who has burst the ties of nature and of blood—cannot now feel the soft meltings of humanity in their favour,”

“My mother,” interrupted Gertrude, with vivacity, “Henry may be deceitful, but Alan wears not the semblance of fraud.”

“Thanks, generous maid,” said the youth, “if Alan wore that semblance, it would

would indeed contradict the tenor of his sentiments."

"I believe thee," said the Countess, "and though my soul revolts at the idea of obligation to Plantagenet, I will quit this dreary abode with thy guidance, if my feeble limbs allow me."

So saying, she gave her hand to Alan, who raised her gently, and Gertrude supporting her at the other side, they passed out of the prison.

Alan conducted his companion to an apartment of the palace, which had been prepared for their reception; and there leaving them to the ministration of Eleanora's women, went in search of the Prince.

Edward shared in the satisfaction of his young friend, and applauded his feelings. The tender Eleanora wept at the recital of the Countess's sufferings, and hastened to procure her every alleviation which kindness could bestow.



Mean time that lady was engaged in consoling her daughter, whose tears now streamed with more violence, than while immured in the dungeon. "Be pacified, my child," cried the wife of Montfort, "thy noble parent will deliver us from the tyrant's power; his coward soul trembles at the name of Leicester. Cease thy lamentations, we shall soon be free."

"Alas!" cried Gertrude, "that freedom—she paused, breathed a deep sigh, and hid her blushing face in the bosom of her mother.

"Relinquish thy doubts," said the Countess, kissing her cheeks, "thou shalt behold the standard of Montfort displayed on the walls of Winchester—thou shalt see my abject, my unnatural, my cruel brother, humbled at the feet of Leicester!"

"O my mother, said Gertrude, suddenly raising her eyes, "is not Alan in the party of Henry?"

The

The Countess started, and Gertrude sunk down confused and fearful.

The former was going to speak, when Henry entered the chamber. At that sight, the wife of Montfort forgot her daughter's words in indignation against her brother. Resentment gave her strength; she arose, and making a repulsive motion with her hand, cast a glance of scorn at the King.

"Comest thou," cried she, "to witness thy work?"—comest thou to receive the acknowledgments of a sister? Take them, base tyrant—but take them as thou deservest, in bitter execrations. May the insults which thou hast offered to the wife and daughter of Montfort, return to thee an hundred fold!—May thy life become as unfortunate as thy person is despicable—and to crown thy anguish and thy torment, mayest thou be reduced to crouch beneath the feet of him thou hatest most—even Leicester.

The

The King turned pale at this address, and Edward, who then entered, overhearing it, besought him to leave the Countess to herself. Henry complied, uttering threats of impotent indignation against Leicester, as he retired.

The Countess could not behold with complacency the son of him she detested. To the offers and soothing of Edward, she answered only, by averted eyes, and a frowning aspect. Gertrude regarded her royal kinsman with more gentle looks, and a more forgiving heart; but she too preserved a strict silence, fearful of irritating her mother.

The Prince, finding all his persuasions ineffectual to allay the anger of the Countess, followed the example of Henry, and quitted the chamber; first giving orders to the attendant women, not to remit their respect and observance of that lady's commands.

Leicester, who had learned the captivity of his family, and their subsequent  
ill



ill treatment, had now the motive of revenge added to that of ambition.

Success seemed to authorize both.— Many populous towns, swayed by his faction, opened their gates to his army; and the citizens of London, breaking into an avowed revolt, after offering many insults to the Queen, pillaged and destroyed the habitations of those who still adhered to Henry.

The brave Edward strained every effort to sustain the cause of his father, while he, ever weak and pusillanimous, contented himself with deploring the turbulence of the times, and making vain applications to the Pope for his protection.

The Countess of Leicester, still a prisoner, though honourably treated, ceased not to exult at this posture of affairs. Alan was the only person within the walls of Winchester whom she saw with pleasure, or spoke to with complacency.

Every

Every hour therefore, which he could spare from the service of the Prince, was spent in her society.

The soul of Gertrude bounded with joy at his approach, and sunk with his departure. If he spoke, she caught his accents with an eager ear, if he touched her hand, a soft thrill ran through her blood, her frame trembled, and her bosom heaved.

Alan, unmoved himself, beheld not her emotions. But the Countess soon perceived her daughter's situation, and remonstrated with her. The innocence of Gertrude was no match for the sollicitations of her mother: she declared the secret of her soul.

"What!" cried the wife of Montfort, with an haughty air, "Is a partizan of Henry beloved by the daughter of Leicester?—Art thou indeed so very mean of heart?"

The gentle Gertrude, petrified by the looks and words of her mother, sunk in

a swoon at her feet. The Countess now repented her harshness; she threw herself beside Gertrude, called her by every endearing appellation, and shed a flood of tears.

In a short time Gertrude recovered her senses. She beheld the attitude of her mother, and pressing her hands, gave her a look full of acknowledgment.—That look served to banish all the anger of the Countess. “My child,” cried, she taking her to her bosom—“my child, canst thou forgive me?—But I will make thee large amends for the pangs I have inflicted on thy gentle heart. Alan shall be thine—he shall desert his allegiance to Henry—thou wilt be the price.”

“O, my mother,” cried Gertrude, with tears of joyful transport,—“how sweet are thy words—how delightful thy assurances! Shall Alan be mine?—shall the noble, the generous, the heroic Alan, be mine for ever?”

Yet,



“ Yet alas !” added she, in a melancholy tone, and casting down her eyes—  
“ Alas ! dear mother, he may despise the fond Gertrude—he may reject her vows.”

“ No,” interrupted the Countess ;—  
“ the daughter of Montfort cannot be despised—she cannot be rejected ! Banish thy fears, my child, and think only of the happiness that awaits thee.”

“ But my father,” said Gertrude, faltering.

“ Ambition, not avarice,” returned the Countess, “ sways the soul of Leicester. The parents of Alan were noble, though an unhappy fatality has deprived him of their rights. The fame of the gallant Fitz-Osborne lives afresh in his son, and the conquering arm of Leicester may restore to him the possessions of his family.”

“ Propitious be the words of my mother,” said Gertrude, kissing her hand.  
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The Countess pressed her to her bosom, and promised to sound Alan on the subject of this discourse, at their next interview.

But they beheld him not again for many days. The Prince, eager to relieve the Queen from the insults she hourly underwent, and sensible that all the avenues to London were guarded by Leicester's army, dispatched Alan with a body of horse to reconnoitre their motions. In executing this service he was discovered by a party of the enemy, and immediately surrounded.

The son of Fitz-Osborne encouraged his men to meet the assault with vigour. The success was equal for some time, but fresh troops coming up under the command of young Montfort, son to Leicester, Alan was obliged to yield, after half his brave adherents lay gasping on the earth. He delivered his sword with an indignant air to the victor, who causing

ing him and his remaining soldiers to be bound, returned with his prisoners to the camp of Leicester.

As that noble was then absent, the captives were committed to strict confinement, 'till his pleasure should be known.

Alan struck with confusion at this ignominious reverse, looked at his bonds, and frowned. "Now," cried he, with emotion—"now shall Eleanora cease to applaud her champion—now shall Edward regret his imprudent confidence!"—"O Heaven!" continued he, throwing himself on the ground, "why died I not like Fitz-Osborne, in the field?"

Gerald, the companion of his imprisonment, sought to console him.

"No, my noble master," cried he, "neither Edward or Eleanora shall regret their confidence in thee. Overwhelmed by numbers, but not depressed in courage, thou didst not yield 'till all methods of resistance were no more."

"Thee



“Thee too, Gerald,” interrupted Alan—  
—“thee too, have I entangled in my ruin!”

“Speak not of ruin,” cried the faithful youth; “Gerald would partake captivity, indignities, and poverty with thee, rather than a downy bed and lordly fare with another.

These words, so full of fidelity, affected Alan. He would have embraced him, but his arms were bound. “Shameful bonds,” said he, indignantly, “ye are fit ornaments for the son of Fitz-Osborne! O, Alice!” said he again, in a tender accent, “dear and beloved Alice! who shall give thee comfort?—who shall mitigate thy woe?—But reserve thy tears, my mother—reserve them for one more worthy—not for a captive and a slave. Alan has disgraced thy lessons—they taught not cowardly submission, but brave resistance! Lord William too—yes, he will point the finger of scorn

scorn—he will say, observe the brave favourite of Edward—see the effects of his valour—bonds and ignominy!”

His exclamations were interrupted by the entrance of young Montfort.

“I come to make thee my acknowledgments,” said he, in an insulting tone; “I find that to thee I am indebted for the loss of a mother and a sister. Heroic youth! thou hast manifested thy prowess well—thou hast conquered women!”

“I wage not a war of words,” answered the son of Fitz-Osborne, in a scornful accent.

“No—deeds speak thy valour,” continued Montfort; “witness thy present state.”

Alan beheld him with a look of indignation and contempt. “If I am again free”—said he—“if I again meet thee in the field.” He paused and cast a glance at his chains—“Vain threats,” added he, “while I wear these.”

“True,”

“ True,” resumed Montfort, “ thy anger is indeed impotent—thou art the captive of Leicefter, and assure thyself he will revenge upon thy head the injuries his wife and daughter have undergone from thy tyrannical and cowardly master.”

“ Let him use his pleasure,” said Alan, calmly; and Montfort passed out.

The terrified Gerald approached his master, and sinking at his feet deplored his misfortune. “ Where is thy fortitude?” said the son of Fitz Osborne.—

“ But now thou madest light of our captivity—what means this sudden change?”

“ Alas!”—replied Gerald, “ I then sought to reconcile thee to thyself; I feared for thee no other enemy; but now what dangers hast thou not to dread—what insults to apprehend—I tremble—O Heaven!—I tremble, even for thy life.”

“ My good Gerald,” replied Alan, “ the ungenerous menaces of Montfort,  
give



give me no other sensation than disdain. His conduct has inspired me with a value for myself, which I possessed not before. —Yes Gerald—I glory in my defeat—I regard it as more honourable than his conquest; since he is capable of using it unworthily.”

“But my master—thy life—thy precious life,” interrupted Gerald. “Can I lose it more nobly than in the service of my Prince, and of my King?” asked Alan.

The question did not satisfy Gerald: he hung his head, but made no reply. The son of Fitz-Osborne endeavoured to inspire his domestic’s drooping soul with fortitude, but in vain. Gerald could smile at his own danger, but that of his master filled him with affright.

Thus passed on the time, till the fourth day of their imprisonment, when the Earl of Leicester arrived at the Camp. His son, acquainted him with the prize  
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he had taken, and Alan was conducted to his presence.

Moved by his fearless and gallant air, he continued gazing at him for some moments in silent admiration!—"What!" cried he at length—"Is this Alan Fitz-Osborne?—Is this beardless youth the hero who mowed down our squadrons, who assaulted our fortresses—who struck terror into the hearts of our adherents!"

"He is now thy captive," said Alan, in a modest tone.

"Would he were my friend!" exclaimed the Earl—"Brave young man, he, who is most injured by thy valour, applauds and honours its exertions. Thou hast robbed me of my family; but I think thou wert not accessory to their evil treatment."

Alan bowed his head in silence.

"No"—resumed the Earl in a voice of resentment. "Henry wanted no instigators

stigators to cruelty—unhappy Isabella!-- the title of sister availed thee little, when contrasted with the crime of being wife to Montfort. My mild Gertrude too;-- the tyrant's barbarity spared not even her!--but partners of my soul, I will avenge you—I will avenge your wrongs, your indignities, perhaps—O! direful thought!—perhaps your deaths!"

"Compose thy apprehensions," said Alan, "the Countess and thy daughter are delivered from the dungeon's gloom—they are now in the court of Henry, and attended as their rank demands."

"May I believe thee?" said the Earl eagerly.

"I am not accustomed to speak the words of falsehood," answered Alan, coldly.

"My father," interrupted young Monfort, "wilt thou trust the declaration of an enemy? seest thou not that his own interest is concerned in thy belief;"



lief;" "peace," said the Earl, "the aspect of this youth, bears the characters of truth and candour.—I accept their testimony."

Alan again bent his head.

"But," continued Leicester, "though I give credence to his intelligence, my resentment is not abated against Henry.—Ever mean and abject, the soul of the tyrant feels not the movements of compassion, but those of fear—and he shall have cause to fear—he shall have cause to tremble—the sceptre shall be torn from that weak and vicious hand, which has only veiled it for the purpose of oppression. It shall fill one more worthy."

He paused, and Alan averted his eyes.

"My words seem to displease thee, young man," said Leicester.

"I approve not the accents of disloyalty," answered he, with a bold and fearless air.

“Ha! beware youth, beware thee,” exclaimed Montfort, “I am not so slow of anger as thou seemest to think.”

“I should merit my own scorn,” said Alan, “if I were swayed by a fear of thy anger to disavow the sentiments of my heart.”

“And does thy heart lead thee to attach thyself to vice, to fickleness, to Henry?” demanded Leicester.

“I respect the foibles of my sovereign,” answered Alan, “and I love the virtues of his son.” Leicester bit his lips and continued silent.

Young Montfort beheld the agitation of the Earl with a secret joy. He envied the spirit and the fame of Alan, and felt all the pleasure of a little mind in the hope of depressing the one, and clouding the other.

But the soul of Leicester, though ambitious of power, was not dead to the sensations of virtue. He felt the reproof  
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of Alan, but he could not help applauding the motive which occasioned it; and at length breaking silence, "I would rather choose thee for my friend than my enemy," said he to the son of Fitz-Osborne, "I condemn not thy gratitude to Edward, who I learn has distinguished thee with a large portion of his favour; but by a similar tie, I would attach thee to myself. Quit a party, which grows every day more weak and more despised—follow the general voice of an united nation—embrace my interests, and be to me as a son. Honours and wealth are, or will be soon, solely in my power to dispense. By adhering to my fortunes, thou wilt deserve, and shalt receive a more than common share."

Alan answered not, but bent his eyes to the ground with an air of confusion.

"Deliberate," continued the Earl, "deliberate on my proposal; thou wilt

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soon



soon perceive the advantages which will accrue from thy acceptance."

"It requires not deliberation," said Alan, in a tone of vivacity; "if thou didst perceive my irresolution, impute it only to the shame that filled my breast, at being suspected capable of so base a change. Dost thou promise me honours? No—the son of Fitz-Osborne spurns at the honours which are to be purchased by disloyalty, and the wealth that is to be acquired by treason! Thou biddest me follow the general voice of an united nation. But what is this nation? All the truly noble, the generous and the brave, cleave to the interests of their king and of their country; interests which, notwithstanding the arguments of sophistry, cannot be divided without the destruction of both. For the noisy and prostituted herd who find no happiness but in tumult, and no pleasure but in change; who, allured by the call of faction and  
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the love of licentiousness, this moment caress and adulate the leader, whom the next they calumniate and reproach. Alan would indeed scorn to embrace their sentiments, or to imitate their conduct."

This spirited reply stung Leicester to the quick. He arose from his seat, and measured some hasty paces across the tent; then turning abruptly—"I know not, young man," cried he haughtily, "whether the insolence of thy discourse springs from a contempt of my power, or a confidence in my clemency?"

"I am unactuated by either," said Alan.

"It may be so," resumed the Earl; "but if thou really didst feel the latter, it shall for once be just. Take heed however bold youth, how thou offendest me again—Leicester does not use to brook insulting language patiently."

In saying thus, he remanded Alan into custody, and young Montfort led him

off. Gerald, who had been in agonies during his master's absence, could not contain his joy at seeing him return safe. This was encreased by a soldier's entering, in pursuance of an order from the Earl, to deliver both from their bonds.

The moment Gerald was at liberty, he flew to Alan's feet, and clasped his knees with rapture. The son of Fitz-Osborne could not behold that action without emotion. He raised the faithful Gerald, and forgetful of the distinctions of servant or master, strained him to his grateful breast.

While these things passed in the camp of Montfort, Edward, ignorant of his young knight's fate, and dreading that some terrible misfortune had befallen him, could not controul his anxiety or his uneasiness.

Walter affected to experience equal pain ; and the more his heart exulted in secret, the more he pretended to deplore  
and



and to bewail a loss which he flattered himself was certain.

The Countess of Leicester really felt that sorrow, of which he assumed only the appearance. But who can speak the pangs of the lovelorn Gertrude. Sunk on the bosom of her mother, she wept without intermission, nor could all the efforts of that lady succeed in alleviating her grief.

“ O, my mother !”—would she cry—  
“ Speak not of comfort; speak of anguish, of affliction, of despair, and I will heed thy words. Was he not most lovely ? Did he not unite the bravery of a hero, with the meekness of infancy ? Was he not generous, gallant, just ?—And he is gone—and thou woulst have my tears cease to flow.—He is gone—and thou talkest to me of comfort !—O my mother—he is gone for ever, and he knew not the heart of Gertrude !—he died ignorant of her love, and thy goodness !”

This idea seemed to give the daughter of Monfort new grief. She would beat her beauteous bosom, she would rend her jetty tresses, she would renew her exclamations.

The Countess, from whom her own sufferings had not extorted a tear, gave many to the sorrow of her daughter. Her days passed in heaviness and mourning;—a prey to maternal fears.—She no longer regarded Henry with resentment, or her captivity with regret.

Things wore a new face, when a deserter from Leicester's camp arriving at Winchester, gave a recital of Alan's encounter, and the result of that event.

The Prince, transported with a sincere joy, hastened to communicate this account to Walter and the King. The former struck with vexation, had his torments encreased, by the necessity of assuming an appearance foreign to his sentiments. He affected to partake the delight

light of Edward, but the struggle in his mind was too apparent. The expressions of pleasure which he attempted to utter, were accompanied by a voice of anguish, and the sounds, half formed, died upon his tongue.

Edward observed him with a penetrating and curious eye. Walter interpreting his looks, and recovering his usual dissimulation, accounted for his confusion by another falsehood.

“Let not my Prince,” said he, “wonder at the seeming contradiction between my words and countenance. True, I feel much satisfaction in the idea of Alan’s safety, but that satisfaction must be imperfect, while he continues a prisoner to Leicester.—The hatred that proud noble bears the King, and his well known enmity to Henry’s party, give me strong cause to fear for my nephew, who has so often and so bravely displayed his loyalty.”

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This eager apology, where no accusation was offered contributed to fix the Prince in an opinion, that he meant not as he said. But concealing his sentiments, he turned to the King, and asked what was to be done.

Henry, unused and incapable of judging for himself, looked at Walter; but another glance from the Prince throwing that hypocrite into his former confusion, he continued silent.

Edward then spoke—"We have already seen," said he, addressing himself to the King, "that Leicester's spirit has not been subdued by the insults offered to his family; he is yet unacquainted with the change in their situation; let the Countess herself bear him the intelligence. We war not with women. Let us set the wife and daughter of Leicester at liberty, and by so doing recover an useful and valiant associate. We will exchange them for my young knight."

Walter

Walter, who still perceived the Prince's eyes fixed upon him, did not dare to thwart his resolution. He even affected to be pleased with it, but he made himself full amends for that constraint when alone.

“Why,” cried he, with a gloomy frown, “why am I forced to assume an appearance of affection for him whom my soul detests? What avails it that I have wrested his inheritance?—that I have stigmatized his birth? Honour surrounds him, affluence awaits him, and my arts recoil upon myself. Perhaps he may one day.”—“No,” cried he, interrupting himself, “that is impossible—oblivion shrouds the fate of Fitz-Osborne and Matilda. What hinders then that I dispatch this obstacle to my peace? He has already twice escaped, but he is not invulnerable. Vain scruples, foolish terrors, be ye banished from the soul of Walter. Ha! that shriek of woe, whence comes it?”

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He paused, and gazed wildly, then suddenly resuming his soliloquy——  
“ ’Twas nothing but the coinage of fancy,” said he, trembling, “ Why should those illusions disturb me—Ha!—again—that dying groan—horror!—the bleeding dagger,”——he sunk senseless on the floor.

Edward, mean while, entered the apartment of the Countess of Leicester.

“ I come, madam,” said he, “ fraught with tidings of joy for you, and my fair kinswoman—freedom awaits you: the King has given orders for your release. We go to exchange you for Alan Fitz-Osborne, who is now detained captive in the camp of Montfort.”

“ Is Alan alive—and in the camp of my spouse?” exclaimed the Countess. Gertrude sunk half fainting on the bosom of her mother. “ He is,” replied the Prince.

“ Did I not tell thee, my Gertrude,” said the Countess, willing to hide the cause



cause of her daughter's agitation, "did I not tell thee we should be free—that we should be delivered from the tyrant's power?—thy pardon, Prince—he is thy father."—"He was once my brother too," added she, "but he has forfeited that name: he is now my foe. And soon, very soon shall the conquering arm of Leicester render him my slave!"

A threat so injurious to the King and to himself inflamed Edward with resentment. But the respect which gallantry exacts to the sex of the Countess, restrained him from expressing it, and he quitted the apartment without reply.

No sooner had he departed, than Gertrude clasped her arms around the Countess.

"He lives!" cried she, exultingly, "he lives! and Gertrude has not to deplore his loss!"

This idea occupied her for some moments, but a sudden recollection soon changed

changed her transports into sorrow. Her bosom heaved with emotion, and her eyes filled with tears.

“O my mother,” cried she, in a tone of dejection, “he lives—but does not live for me. This exchange—bear with thy daughter—this freedom—what is it but misery?—we shall quit Winchester—we shalt not see him—he will attach himself more firmly than ever to the cause of Henry!”

“Compose thyself, my child,” cried the Countess, “why these forebodings, when happiness begins to dawn upon us? A joyful presage assures me of thy noble fire’s success. Thinkest thou that Alan will not desert a fallen party for one victorious? Thinkest thou he will refuse the alliance of the ruler of the state of Leicester?”

Ah! if interest, not love, induces his compliance,” interrupted Gertrude—she paused, and a deep blush overspread her cheek.

“Spare

“Spare thy fears,” said the Countess, kissing her forehead and smiling. “both shall unite to secure the felicity of my child.”

Gertrude too attempted to smile, but the apprehensions inseparable from real affection, mingled a tear with the smile.





## BOOK THE THIRD.

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EDWARD now dispatched a herald to the camp of the enemy, to propose the preconcerted exchange. Leicester deliberated some time whether he should accept it, or return an answer of defiance.

At length the feelings of nature conquered those of pride. He assented to the demand of Edward, and after sending away the herald, commanded Alan to be conducted to his tent.

The gallant deportment of that youth, his spirit and his candour, had insensibly attached to him a large portion of Leicester's esteem. He meant to try one  
more

more effort to detach him from the party of the King, before he announced his freedom, and with that intention now desired his presence.

“Come hither, youth,” cried he, as the son of Fitz-Osborne entered, “I have something to impart to thee in confidence.”

Alan drew near, and seated himself on a bench beside the Earl. Leicester then commanded the tent to be cleared, and when his orders were obeyed——

“I am going,” said he, “to tell thee some instances of my good fortune, not with a design to insult thee, but to prove the frailty of thy dependance on Henry and his son.” Alan smiled, but spoke not.

“I will own to thee,” continued the Earl, “that some time since I experienced not a few apprehensions for the success of my projects. But the execution is now certain, and I fear no more.

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Thou already knowest that the capital, and many other towns, have openly espoused my cause. Several prime fortresses have also been subdued since thy imprisonment. But this is not all, even in the court of Henry, where I am branded with the name of traitor, where my person is spoken of with distaste, and my ambition with abhorrence, even in that court I have secret friends. Those persons in whom he places most confidence, and whom he regards with most affection, those very persons are my most assured adherents. I have intelligence of all his motions, all his designs, and even of his thoughts. Through this medium I learn, that he is inclined to conclude a peace on any terms, however shameful. He thinks with reason, that it is better to submit in time to a power which must overwhelm him at last. The Prince alone resists. Actuated by the sanguine hopes of youth, he fancies  
nothing

nothing impossible to the valour of his arm, and will not hear of an accommodation. But he will soon discover his mistake. The wishes of the people are for me. The barons, sensible that their own interests depend on mine, have unanimously declared in my favour. And the clergy, that holy and respectable body, at once sanctify my cause, and ensure my success."

"And has not Edward any real friends?" said Alan, coolly.

From that question, the Earl prognosticated that his discourse had taken effect.

"Few are the number," replied he, "and soon will he discover the fallacy of their professions, who pretend to be so."

"Yes," cried the son of Fitz-Osborne, rising with an enthusiastic air, "yes!—he has one friend—one powerful friend—one great protector—even the God of armies!

armies! He may chasten Henry in his anger, but he will shield Edward with his love—he will assert the rights of his anointed—he will launch the bolts of his vengeance against the oppressors of injured royalty!”

The eyes of Alan lightened as he spoke, his form assumed a more than mortal air, he seemed to utter the language of inspiration.

Leicester shrunk within himself; the contrast was too humiliating. He maintained a deep silence for some moments. At length confusion gave place to resentment. “Go, bold youth,” cried he in an haughty tone, “go, utter thy prophetic rhapsodies elsewhere!—Leicester disdains them. Thank the sacred laws of honour for my forbearance—were not my word already pledged to set thee free, thou shouldst haply know that my offers are not to be despised, nor my person insulted with impunity.”

“Yes,”



“Yes,” continued he, “thou art free if thou canst call slavery freedom. A few hours will give thee back to the service of that master whom thou preferrest to Montfort—but take heed how I meet thee in the field.”

“I will not avoid thee,” replied the youth, with a resolute air.

“’Tis well,” returned Montfort—let thy actions answer to thy words, and I may think thee an adversary not unworthy of my sword.”

Alan now quitted the Earl’s tent, and rejoined his domestic, to whom he communicated what had passed. Gerald trembled at one part of his discourse, but his heart bounded with joy at the conclusion.

“My master, thou wilt be free!” cried he exultingly, vexation will torment the soul of Lord William, and thy beloved Alice shall rejoice.”

In a short time the foldiers of Leicester conducted them out of the camp, to a  
place

place where they found horses and an escort prepared. As Alan vaulted on his steed, young Montfort cried with a loud voice and menacing accent, "beware thee of a second captivity!"

Alan turned his head. "Imitate not the clamours of women," said he, contemptuously, "a few days may perhaps prove to thee, I answer not with words, but deeds.

"Darest thou accept of my defiance?" said Montfort, flinging down his glove. "I dare, and will!" exclaimed Alan, taking it up, and placing it in the front of his helmet. He spurred his horse, and with his escort was soon at a considerable distance from the camp.

The Countess and her daughter, attended by Edward and a party from Winchester, met them half way.

When the prisoners were exchanged, Alan threw himself at the Prince's feet. "Will Edward," said he, "receive the vanquished, and the unworthy?"

"No,"

“No,” answered the Prince, obliging him to rise, “but he will receive his hero, the brave son of Fitz Osborne.

“My mother,” whispered Gertrude to the Countess, “he sees us not—he has no eyes but for Edward—my mother, cease to inspire me with delusive hopes—he loves not Gertrude!”

At that instant, Alan approached, and bending on one knee, pressed a hand of each to his lips.

“Respected ladies,” said he, “we part, perhaps, for ever. If the humble Alan should still preserve a place in your memories, think of him as one, who would have sacrificed every thing for your service, save his honour and his Prince.”

A deep red suffused the cheeks of Gertrude. She opened her lips, murmured some articulate sounds, closed them again, and breathed a heavy sigh.

“Generous youth,” said the Countess, “we cannot forget thee if we would.

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Assure thyself, that Gertrude and Isabella can never lose the remembrance of thy virtues, nor ever recall them without esteem and love."

At these words, the Countess, led by Edward, placed herself in the litter, which was to convey her to the camp of her spouse. Alan took the trembling hand of Gertrude, and seated her by her mother. The Countess waved her arm thrice as the litter drove off; and the son of Fitz-Osborne, with Edward and his attendants, pursued their way to Winchester.

Here Alan communicated to the Prince what Leicester had hinted of the disaffection of the courtiers. Edward repeated the intelligence to the King, in the presence of Walter and some other nobles, and watched the countenance of his auditors with a scrutinizing attention.

His observations convinced him that the words of Leicester were grounded

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in truth. Walter was amongst the number who incurred his suspicions; the looks of that usurper betrayed confusion and anxiety, nor could the veil of dissimulation, with which he attempted to cover these emotions, conceal them from the discerning eye of Edward.

He communicated in private to the King, the discoveries he had made, and the disclosure affected Henry differently from what he had expected. Instead of guarding against the machinations of his courtiers, or punishing their disaffection, he made that a plea to re-urge the necessity of coming to an accommodation with Leicester.

The Prince interrupted him. "We can make no peace," said he, "but on terms equally dishonourable to ourselves, and detrimental to our people. Let us, therefore, by continuing a noble resistance, prove ourselves worthy of good fortune, though we fail to gain it."

The

The pusillanimous Henry accorded not with the sentiments of his son. New successes of Leicester's, determined him still more against them; and the advice of Walter, contributed to fix his opinion.

The Prince had not been deceived in his suspicions of that treacherous counsellor; he was in truth one of the secret friends to whom Montfort alluded, and again played that double part he had acted formerly.

He was actuated to this conduct by the weakness of the King, and the power of his enemy; sensible that when Leicester's views were accomplished, those who had most resisted his designs would prove the first victims to his resentment; he flattered himself that a contrary conduct would produce contrary effects, while he hoped at the same time to preserve his usual credit with the King, by his dissimulation.



Henry now openly prepared to treat of an accommodation, and commissions were appointed on both sides to begin the conference, though without the concurrence of Prince Edward.

The conditions which Leicester offered were, that the provisions of Oxford should be again restored, and the barons reinstated in their former authority; that all the royal castles and fortresses should be put into their possession; that they should name the officers of the King's household and family; that a parliament should be summoned to meet at Westminster, in order to concert a plan for their future government. Humiliating as were these conditions, Henry assented to them all, and Leicester lost no time in improving his success.

A parliament was immediately assembled, which enacted that the twenty-four barons should continue to hold the reins of government, not only during the  
life

life of Henry, but also during the reign of his son.

Far from acquiescing in this shameful agreement, Edward appealed to Lewis of France, to whom he consented to refer the subject of his infringed pretensions.

While he waited for the decision of that Monarch, Richard, the brother of Henry, arrived from Germany, where he had been lately honoured with the title of King of the Romans; the counsels of this Prince fortified the resolution of Edward, and again changed the opinion of the irresolute Henry.

Walter continued to give secret advice to Leicester of all their intentions, but finding his communications slighted by that haughty noble, who imagined that the spirit of the royal party was for ever crushed, shame and mortification overwhelmed him; he found he was contemned by one side, and suspected by the other.

In this posture were affairs, when Alan, entering one morning the apartment of Edward, exclaimed in a joyful tone—"The messenger of Lewis awaits the pleasure of my Prince."—"By thy countenance I guess the tenour of his tidings," returned Edward, "let him be admitted."

Alan rushed out, and returned with the envoy.

It was Philip de Aumale. The Prince advanced towards him, and saluted him with an air of affability.

"Health and good fortune to Edward!" cried De Aumale, bending his knee; "May his enemies perish before him—may the wishes of my pious master be answered!"

"Then they are for me?" cried Edward, eagerly.

"This speaks the will of my King," returned De Aumale, holding out a paper—"I have orders to open it in the presence



presence of England's Monarch, and in thine."

The Prince instantly conducted him to Henry, and assembling the remaining courtiers, De Aumale read these words aloud :

" We have considered the complaints  
" of Edward, and find them consonant to  
" justice ; according to our opinion, his  
" cause is the common one of Princes ;  
" we regard the proceedings of the ba-  
" rons as equally derogatory to the ma-  
" jesty of the throne, and injurious to  
" the rights of the people.—We call on  
" Edward to vindicate each, and we  
" promise him our hearty concurrence.

" Signed,

" LEWIS."

" Just and pious Monarch !" exclaimed the Prince, " and Edward will answer to thy call—he will break the shameful

and ignominious bonds that hold his father, and oppress his people !”

“ May the King of Kings, ratify these words with the seal of success,” cried Alan, with uplifted eyes : “ Youth,” said De Aumale, pressing his hand, “ thou art loyal—a Frenchman approves loyalty—if thou ever visitest my country, expect to meet in it a friend.”

Walter bent his brow involuntary—“ Bane of my peace,”—said he to himself—“ must thy praises ever grate mine ear ?”

He forgot his hypocrisy for a moment ; —“ if loyalty,” said he aloud in a fullen tone—“ if loyalty attracts the esteem of De Aumale, the court of Henry presents many objects to his regard.”

He had no sooner spoken these words than he repented of having uttered them. —The Prince observed his malice, and detested it.—De Aumale frowned disapprobation ; and Alan glanced towards him a look of contemptuous pity.

Sensible

Sensible of his error, he would have glossed over the black sensations of his heart ; but it was too late, he had already withdrawn the veil, and it could not be replaced ; stung with shame at finding his efforts ineffectual, he spoke no more, and his silence caused no regret.

Edward, following the counsels of De-Aumale, made the decision of the French Monarch public, and summoned the military vassals of the crown to attend him.

The absence of Leicester, who was then in a different quarter of the kingdom, furthered his designs, and they were shortly ripe for execution.

He advanced to Northampton, at the head of a small body of troops, which were considerably reinforced on the way. That town submitted after a faint resistance ; and Leicester and Nottingham followed its example.



This dawning of success filled the Prince with joy, and inspired his adherents with confidence. Many nobles who had before feared to declare themselves, now resorted quick to his standard. The meaner ranks of people, ever wavering in their sentiments, and capricious in their actions, once more declared in his favor, and made vows for his safety. Every thing seemed to smile, and he proceeded into the county of Derby to ravage the estates of those persons who had espoused the opposite cause.

Leicester then first learned his successes, and trembled for the event. He raised the siege of Rochester, which his army was then attacking, and retreated hastily to London, where he was joined by a considerable body of the citizens.

Finding his forces now more than equal in strength to those of the Prince, he determined to seek an engagement, and advanced to Lewes in Sussex, whither Edward hastened to meet him.

While

While the armies lay within fight of each other, Leicester, willing to give some colouring of legality to his ambition, pretended to be still anxious for peace, and dispatched a herald to the camp of Edward, with proposals of accomodation, which he well knew would never be accepted.

The event answered his expectations. They were rejected with indignation and contempt, and both sides prepared for the battle with equal resolution and animosity.

It was then night, and the ensuing morn was destined to usher in a scene of carnage and desolation.

As the herald was quitting the camp, Alan stepped hastily after him—"Tell Henry De Montfort," said he, in a low voice, and pointing to his helmet, "that I still wear the pledge of his defiance—Bid him seek me out to-morrow, and regain it if he can."

— "And

“ And I too,” returned the herald, “ bear thee a message, but not from the son of Montfort.” At these words he put a paper into the hands of Alan—“ Peruse that,” added he, “ and give me thy reply.” The contents were to this effect.

“ If the son of Fitz-Osborne yet retains any kind remembrance of Isabella, and of Gertrude, he will repair at the hour of midnight to the south side of the copse that skirts the encampment of Edward. Let not apprehension restrain his steps—the names of Isabella and of Gertrude shall be his security from danger.”

“ They shall !” cried the youth, with vivacity. “ Inform those who sent thee,” continued he, “ that the compliance of Alan shall demonstrate his attachment.” The herald bowed to this reply, and departed.

Alan



Alan, apprehending that the zeal of Gerald might lead him to commit some indiscretion, communicated not to him the tenor of his promise ; but when the hour of appointment came, he took his way to the copse, unattended.

He had not remained long there when two women approached, who, though disguised with veils, he discovered to be the Countess and her daughter. The bright beams of the moon rendering objects easily discernable, they perceived and knew him at the same time.—

“ Ah !” exclaimed Gertrude, in a low and tremulous voice, “ Ah ! my mother, it is he—it is Alan !”

The son of Fitz-Osborne rushed forward, and threw himself at the feet of the Countess. Noble Lady,” cried he, “ I come to thank thy condescension, and to learn thy commands.”

“ I expected no less from thy fearless and gallant spirit,” answered the Countess,

ters, "I am about to give thee an equal proof of my confidence and my esteem."

So saying, she seated herself on the ground, and motioning with her head to Gertrude and to Alan, they placed themselves beside her.

A deep silence reigned for some moments. The daughter of Leicester, trembling and confused, alternately glanced her eyes from the ground to the countenance of her mother. She once turned them towards Alan, when perceiving his fixed on her with an expression of wonder and anxiety, she hastily averted them. The Countess seemed to labour too under some confusion, but at length recovering her wonted sedateness—"Esteemed youth," cried she, pressing the hand of Alan, "why must I call him my enemy, to whom my heart would give the endearing name of son?"

At these words, Gertrude sunk gently on her mother's breast—"Be composed, thou

thou trembler," said the Countess;—"shame not in thy sensations. He who is the cause is worthy of having inspired them."

The son of Fitz-Osborne, now struck with an idea he had never before conceived, was moved to his inmost soul. The Countess did not suffer him to continue in suspense.

"Youth, canst thou guess from whence arise the emotions of my daughter?"—said she smiling. Then assuming an air of more solemnity.—"Yes," continued she, "why should I conceal it?—Gertrude Montfort, loves thee, Alan, and I approve her affection—I do more—I applaud it. Thou art the son of my election, and of my wishes. Leicester himself is sensible of thy virtues, and disdains not thy alliance. But I will confess to thee, that there are some sacrifices required on thy part. Thou must be all our own—thou must quit Henry—thou must



must desert his son. But thy desertion will be honourable and advantageous. In joining Leicester, thou wilt join the cause of liberty. In espousing his daughter, thou wilt secure thy fortunes and thy happiness.

“ And does this beauteous maid ? ” — interrupted Alan. He paused, “ Yes,” resumed the Countess, “ she loves thee, she is wholly thine ; I anticipate thy joy ; I doubt not thy compliance ; I hail thee as my son, as the spouse of Gertrude ! ”

“ O, Heaven ! ” cried Alan faltering, “ Edward—my country ! ”

“ Think of thy future bride,” said the Countess ; “ think of liberty—of wealth—of power, and let me lead thee to the camp of Leicester.” She took his hand—“ Never ! never ! ” cried he, in a vehement accent.

“ My mother, he disdains us,” said Gertrude, rising, “ O, my mother, let us return—let us not await his disdain ? ”

“ Dis-

“Disdain thee, sweet maid!” cried he, in a passionate tone. “No, with my life.” He fell at her feet; he pressed her passive hand to his lips. “Come,” said the Countess, inspired with a fresh hope; “come, we will return together; let me lead my children to their other parent.” “Condescending and noble Lady,” cried Alan, in a tone of grief, “would I could obey thee, but my honour—my prince—No—never—never shall the son of Fitz-Osborne merit the appellation of traitor.”

“’Tis well,” said the Countess, haughtily, “we deserve thy scorn, since we have incurred our own. Come, Gertrude, we will leave this insensible—this ungrateful youth, to the reproaches of his own heart.”

“Oh!” said the son of Fitz-Osborne, catching her robe, and throwing himself into an attitude of supplication, “O were that heart laid open to thy view, thou wouldst

wouldst perceive it neither insensible nor ungrateful, but torn by conflicting emotions, and pierced with anguish and regret! Hear me, Lady—hear perhaps the last sounds which may ever greet thy ear from an unfortunate. Did I attend only to my own inclinations, most gladly—most joyfully would I accede to thy proposal, but I have higher duties to fulfil—duties which cannot be neglected without subsequent remorse and shame——The generous Edward has not only honoured me with his notice, but his love. Shall I requite these with a black and treacherous desertion? No—the soul of Isabella must detest me, were I capable of ingratitude so base.”

“Lovely maid,” continued he, addressing himself to Gertrude, “Alan dares to hope thy pity, not thy resentment. He bids thee farewell—he implores heaven’s choicest blessings on thy head—he supplicates that the number of thy felicities



cities may equal, if possible, the sum of thy virtues !”

In saying these words he let go his hold. The Countess regarded him with a milder look: Gertrude breathed a deep sigh; and both turning from him, walked away with a quick pace, and were soon out of sight.

Alan gazed towards the path they had taken—“I am beloved,” said he sighing, “beloved by the daughter of Leicester, and I reject her. What barbarity!—But honour—gratitude—all forbid my compliance. I obey their dictates;—I will merit the approbation of my own heart. Though I cannot be happy, I will not cease to be virtuous.”

In saying these words, he returned to the camp with a dejected aspect, and unsteady steps. He found Gerald watching with the centinels. His absence had given that faithful creature a thousand fears, and he resolved to take no rest till he beheld him again.

The

The sadness of Alan's deportment moderated the joy he felt for his return, and he attended him to his tent with a countenance of solicitude and concern. Alan penetrated his thoughts, but the secret of Gertrude was too important and too sacred to be even intrusted with Gerald, he therefore assumed an air of more composure, and pretending drowsiness dismissed him.

Repose however came not to his bosom. Gertrude was still present to his ideas. He fancied he saw her weak, pale, sinking under the agonies of ill-requited love. His heart bled with compassion and regret, and drops of tender pity trembled in his eyes.

"O why," would he cry incessantly, "why do the rules of honour contradict the soft affections of the soul? gentle maid, and sweet as gentle!—but for this stern monitor, Alan would cast himself at thy feet, would breathe impassioned vows in thy ear, would render thee sole arbitress of his fate!"

While

While the son of Fitz-Osborne consumed the short remainder of the night in sighs and exclamations, scenes of a similar nature passed in the camp of Leicester. At the return of the Countess, her looks, and the tears of Gertrude, too plainly manifested to Montfort their ill success. The relation of the Countess soon confirmed his suspicions, and stung his pride.

“ Ah !” cried he, in a tone of haughtiness and anger. “ this insolent stripling shall mourn his rash rejection in tears of blood, before the setting of to-morrow’s sun !”

“ My father !” exclaimed Gertrude, flinging herself at his feet. The Earl beheld her posture with indignation.—

“ Call me not thy father,” cried he “ I disdain the name !—what dost thou deprecate my threats ?—thou who shouldst stimulate my arm to deeds of vengeance — poor spirited girl—my heart disclaims

thy



thy alliance—hence!—lest I spurn thee!” The weeping Gertrude attempted to arise—her limbs tottered—her eyes closed—she sunk again on the earth.

“Barbarian!” exclaimed the Countess, rushing towards her, “Barbarian, thou hast destroyed my child!”

“What,” cried the Earl, “is Isabella become the advocate of meanness?—will she encourage the weakness of her daughter?”—“go,” continued he, in an ironical tone, “go—thou hadst best woo the stripling again—implore his compassion:—perhaps he will have pity on the love-sick Gertrude—perhaps he will relent—thou hast but to kneel at his feet—to weep—to supplicate—meet office for the wife of Montfort!”

“Cease thy insulting taunts,” said the Countess, who had now taken Gertrude in her arms, “the soul of Isabella is as remote from meanness as thy own, though alive to the feelings of maternal love.”

In

In speaking thus, she renewed her endeavours to restore the unhappy Gertrude to life, and in a short time succeeded. "Come, my child," cried she,—"come, we will retire—thou hast need of repose.

"Repose!" repeated Gertrude in a tone of anguish. The stern looks of the Earl prevented her from going on—she arose, pressed the hand of her mother, and both retired from his tent to their own.

Scarce had the rising sun began to streak the horizon with purple light, when the son of Fitz-Osborne started from his sleepless couch, roused by the chearful voices of the soldiers, and the martial din of clashing shields.

The idea of Gertrude, her love, her despair, all sorrowful reflections vanished: the noble ardour of glory alone possessed him. He thought of the battle; chid his slothful grief, and hastened to seek the Prince.

Edward

Edward advanced to meet him with a smiling countenance, "My brave associate," cried he, "this morn gives us the possession of our rights, or an honourable death.

"May conquest crown the sword of my Prince!" answered Alan, with sparkling eyes, "it must—it will!—Soon shall thy proud enemies bite the ground in agony!"

"I accept the presage," returned Edward, "but come, time presses. Let us animate the hearts of our men"—

He then, accompanied by Alan, passed into the midst of the camp. The King and his brother were already there. At the sight of Edward, the soldiers thronging round him, desired with loud clamours to be led against the foe. "We will follow our Prince," cried they, "to victory, or to death!"

Their zeal affected Edward, "yet a few hours," said he to himself, "and ruthless



ruthless war shall transform half these gallant spirits into pale and bleeding corpses." For a moment concern shaded his features. He recollected the justice of his cause, and it was no more.

The army was now quickly put into array of battle, and formed into three divisions. Edward placed himself at the head of the right wing, the King of the Romans commanded the left, and Henry continued in the center.

The shouts of Leicester's forces, already advancing, assailed their ears. Edward quitted his post for a moment, and riding through the ranks, "my friends," cried he, "remember you fight for your King, your Prince, and your liberties, against tyranny and usurpation—think what glory awaits the victors, and what shame the vanquished!" "While we have such a leader as Edward," returned they with one voice, "we dread not the latter."

The two armies now approached each other, and the engagement began. A

shower of darts filled the air, and obscured the light of day. The loud clangor of the trumpets stifled the cries of the wounded, and inflamed the assailants with new fury.

Another discharge of arrows was a prelude to closer combat. They engaged sword in hand. No stroke fell harmless; and mutual carnage soon dyed the field with blood.

While horror and desolation stalked triumphant, Alan, who fought close by the Prince's side, perceived Henry De Montfort advancing towards him. At the sight of each other, their eyes flashed fire and defiance.

"I come," cried young Montfort aloud, "I come to avenge a sister!"

Alan started. "I will avoid the brother of Gertrude," said he, retreating a few paces.

"Dost thou fly me?" exclaimed young Monfort, "is this the fruit of thy  
daring?"

daring?—but I forgot me——cowards abound in boasts.

“Ha!” returned Alan, “coward dost thou say?” He rushed forward—Montfort met his attack——they closed——their swords gleamed dreadful—blood followed every blow, and encreased their rage—they flung away their shields and redoubled their exertions. At length, Alan pierced the right arm of Montfort. His weapon fell from his hand, and left him at the mercy of the victor. “I give thee thy life,” cried the son of Fitz-Osborne, “I give it thee for the sake of Gertrude.” He waited not for a reply, but again joined the Prince.

Young Montfort was borne off the field by some of his own party; gnashing his teeth, and cursing the success of his conqueror.

The Londoners commanded by Nicholas Seagrave, now felt the fury of Edward. “My mother!” cried he, rushing upon them.



That word seemed to give his arm more than mortal force. Terror and destruction trod in his steps. His soldiers animated by his example, assaulted the enemy with such vigour, that they were obliged to give way. Edward, eager to revenge the Queen, pursued them with unrelenting slaughter, and Alan well seconded his blows.

Leicester, mean time, attacked the left wing with all his forces. It resisted bravely, but numbers conquered valour. The fortune of the day once more changed, it was routed, and the King and his brother taken prisoners.

Edward now returned, flushed with conquest, from the pursuit. What a spectacle awaited him!—The field strewn with the bodies of his adherents; some writhing in agony, and breathing their last sighs at his feet.

The intelligence of his father's defeat and captivity, reached him at the same moment,

moment. "Then all is lost!" cried he aloud.

"We have despair left us," interrupted Alan, "let us wreak its effects on our enemies—let us die with honour."

The soldiers, with loud shouts, protested they would spill the last drop of their blood in defence of their Prince.

"And I, my faithful companions," returned Edward, "will mingle mine with yours."

While this brave troop prepared to execute their declarations, a herald arrived from Leicester, under pretence of negotiating terms of peace.

The Prince, unacquainted with deceit himself, suspected none in these proposals. While he was considering how to answer them, his little army was suddenly surrounded by Leicester's forces, and he found himself obliged to submit to whatever terms the conqueror pleased to impose.

Shame and indignation now possessed the soul of Edward. "Is this," cried he, turning to Alan, "is this the favour I promised thee?—my young friend, thou hast done ill to embrace the cause of Edward.—O Eleanora," added he, sighing, "wilt thou blush for thy spouse?—wilt thou despise him?—My beloved, who shall defend thee from insult?—who shall defend thee from wrongs?"

At that moment another message arrived from Leicester. The Earl required Edward and Henry De Almain, one of the royal generals, to surrender themselves in the room of the King and his brother, whom he promised to release.

The Prince submitted, indignantly, to what he could not avoid. Alan would not be separated from him. "The son of Fitz-Osborne," cried he, "will not be free while Edward is a captive." The Prince attempted to dissuade him from his resolution, but in vain. He attended his



his steps to Leicester's presence, followed by Gerald.

Montfort beheld his royal prisoner with looks of exultation and triumph. "Well," cried he, with an insulting air, "Edward is a prisoner, and Leicester conquers."

Perform thy agreement," said the Prince, coolly.

"Thou art too hasty," resumed the Earl, "thy impetuosity has already cost thee dear—I pity, but will not imitate it.—Leicester deliberates before he acts."

"I should not have expected sincerity from a traitor," replied Edward.

"Ha!" exclaimed Montfort, "thou art too bold—recollect thou art my captive, and dread my power!"

"I despise it!" answered the Prince, assuming a disdainful smile. Leicester was going to reply, when casting his eyes on Alan—"ha! art thou here?" he exclaimed—"now on my soul, thy inso-

lence shall meet its just reward!—Take him hence, continued he, turning to the soldiers, “bind him in strong chains, and see that on your lives you suffer him not to escape.”

“Proud Lord,” exclaimed Edward, “darest thou insult my servants in my very presence?—Soldiers,” added he resolutely, “obey not the voice of this traitor—behold the son of your King, and give heed to his commands.” They had already seized Alan, but these words struck them with surprize and fear. They quitted their holds.

“Daftards!” cried Leicester, enraged “am I not your general?—dare you disobey me?—Prince,” continued he, “I will prove to thee that this is the camp of Leicester, not of Edward—with this youth I have a reckoning of no common sort.”

The soldiers again surrounded Alan, and led him off. That action redoubled  
the

the anger of the Prince; he however continued silent, sensible that expostulation would answer no other purpose than feeding the pride of Leicester.

As the mountain oak, when assailed by boisterous winds, bends its awful head to the tempest, yet remains unshaken in its roots, so the gallant Edward submitted to his fate, yet continued unsubdued in spirit and in courage.

Leicester, willing to secure his noble prisoner, had him conducted under a strong guard to the castle of Dover, which he allotted for the place of his confinement; and then with the residue of his captives proceeded to London, and possessed himself of the palace of Henry. There, instead of setting the King and his brother at liberty, he rendered their bondage more strict than ever, and contenting himself for the present, with keeping Alan in durance, he determined to secure his power before he indulged his resentment.



Gertrude, uncertain yet of the fate of this youth, poured her lamentations into the bosom of her mother. The Countess, far from condemning the effusions of her love, sought only how to allay her apprehensions. She enquired of the soldiers, whether the son of Fitz-Osborne had fallen in the field, or been taken captive. Their answer satisfied her of his safety, and she hastened to impart the tidings to her daughter.

“Alas!” said Gertrude, raising her swollen eyes, “Alas! dear mother, what avails his being now alive?—Is he not in the power of Leicester—of his most cruel enemy? Ah! my father—to redress the fancied injury of Gertrude, thou wilt murder her repose!”

“Spare thyself these needless fears,” answered the Countess, “Leicester will not take a base advantage of the chance of war.”

“Ah!”

“ Ah !” cried Gertrude, “ is he not ambitious—is he not proud—is he not revengeful ?” The Countess frowned.

“ Pardon, my mother,”—cried she,—  
“ pardon the inadvertent exclamations of a breaking heart—of a heart which, however slighted, however disdained, cannot lose the image of Alan—cannot cease its perturbations for his danger—cannot cease its vows and its wishes for his safety. O, my mother, this heart may be mean, may be unworthy the daughter of Leicester, but its emotions cannot be restrained or corrected, while Gertrude exists.” “ Dear youth,” continued she, “ dear son of Fitz-Osborne—how know I but this moment takes thee from me for ever ? And she who would die to save thee, is the cause of thy death—she who would shed her blood to procure thee ease, is the sole cause of thy sufferings.” “ O, my mother ! hide that thought from the wretched Gertrude ; assist—comfort—bless her, and set Alan free !”

“ What

“What can I do?” said the Countess, “Shall I incur the anger of my husband, or destroy my child?” She paused—  
“Ah!” said she again, “dear Gertrude, I cannot resist thee—thou hast conquered.” Gertrude kissed her hand in silence.  
“But,” continued the Countess, “how shall we accomplish the freedom of Alan?”  
“Gold, my mother—all powerful gold.”

The Countess smiled—“We will try its power,” cried she; “but we will first try what our solicitations may do with Leicester.”

Gertrude shook her head, doubtingly, and the Countess pursued her purpose. She found her spouse and son together: Young Montfort had his arm in a sling, and looked weak and pale, from loss of blood.

“Well, Isabella,” said Leicester, in a triumphant tone, “Fortune has at length fully crowned our wishes.—The tyrant is enslaved, and thou shalt yet sit in the throne



throne of Eleanora \*! But we must observe cautious measures, else will the simple herd, who so loudly bellow for freedom, without knowing what it means, take the alarm, and frustrate our designs."

"Thou art wise," replied the Countess, "and thou canst take these measures—for me, I join in the satisfaction, and I utter vows for thy success. Mean time I have a request to make thee, which, if thou knowest thy own glory, thou wilt not refuse. Let the first act of thy power prove thee worthy of possessing it."

"Ha!" interrupted the Earl, "thou dost not ask me to deliver Henry and his brother to freedom?" "No," resumed the Countess, "it is for Alan Fitz-Osborne I implore thee."—"What!"—cried young Montfort, "will my mother

\* The Queen.

ther intercede for the enemy of her son?"

"How long is he become thy enemy?" asked Isabella.——"Behold one proof of the love he bears thy family;"——returned he, holding out his wounded arm.

"Ah!" cried the Countess indignant-ly;—"is the son of Isabella—the descendant of Kings, capable of bearing low malice for an accidental offence?—thou didst thy duty in fighting for thy father, Alan followed his, in supporting his Prince—His zeal was not the less virtuous for being mistaken."

"But when I tell thee," returned young Montfort—"that this virtuous youth—this favourite of my mother, singled me from the croud of warriors, rushed upon me with the fury of a raging lion—thirsted for my blood—would have plunged his sword in my breast—will Isabella condemn my resentment—will she prevent my vengeance?"

The

The Countess started, an air of incredulity sat upon her features. "Are thy words true?" cried she, "did Alan thirst for the blood of my son—of the brother of Gertrude." "Yes," such is the love he bears her," cried the Earl. "Cease Isabella, cease to indulge the foolish fantasies of a simple girl; recall a sense of thy own dignity—think thou art the wife of Montfort—the future sovereign of England." The countess replied not, but quitting the apartment, returned to her daughter; her looks denoted anger and confusion.

"Ah! my mother," exclaimed Gertrude—"I read ill success in thy aspect."

"Speak no more of Alan," replied the Countess, frowning—"he is unworthy of thy care, and my solicitude."

"My mother!"

"Peace! returned Isabella; "canst thou plead for him who sought thy brother's



ther's life?—if he was noble—if he was grateful, would he not rather have bared his own bosom to the sword of Henry De Montfort, than have assaulted his.”

“And he is both!” cried Gertrude, with courage; “my mother, they have abused thine ear with a base falsehood—believe not their intelligence; Alan did not seek the life of Henry De Montfort, my cruel brother rather pursued his. Recall to thy remembrance, the time when returning from captivity we spoke of Alan—recall how Henry De Montfort sickened at his praises—how the envy of his heart displayed itself on his countenance, and was heard from his lips. O my mother, recall also the nobleness of Alan—recall his rejection of me—was it not dictated by virtue? did not his bosom bleed with compassion, and his eyes fill with tears.”

The Countess sighed, and looked irresolute. Gertrude perceived the yielding

ing of her soul—she threw herself at her feet.

“My mother,” resumed she; “he would have loved Gertrude, had not honour forbade him; and shall we not respect that honour, though it afflicts us?” “Yes, Isabella will hear the prayer of her kneeling child---she will not sacrifice her daughter’s peace, to the pride and malice of her son---she will follow the generous movement, of her heart---she will preserve Alan from the machinations of his enemies---she will give him safety and freedom.”

A shower of tears which accompanied this address, contributed to subdue the Countess.---She assented---she promised every thing to her beloved Gertrude. Nought now remained, but to get intelligence where Alan was confined Isabella inquired of her domestics, and they informed her he was immured in a subterraneous dungeon of the palace.

Accompanied

Accompanied by Gertrude, she repaired to this place an hour before midnight. As the keeper had been already bribed, they were admitted without difficulty.

Alan turned his head at their entrance but he could not rise, his limbs were chained to the floor, and Gerald shared the fate of his master.

“ O Heaven !” cried the Countess, “ what barbarity !” She called the keeper, and the sight of more gold soon prevailed upon him to loose the bonds that held the son of Fitz-Osborne and his domestic in thralldom. Gertrude stood aloof, pale and trembling, she opened her lips, but closed them again without uttering a word.

Alan arose, he observed her situation. “ Twice !” cried he, “ has Henry De Montfort entered my dungeon---twice has he entered to insult me !---But he is the son of Isabella--he is the brother of  
Ger-



Gertrude added he, kissing a hand of each.

“Generous youth!” said the Countess, “how hast thou been injured!” “Did I not tell thee my mother?” interrupted Gertrude. “Yes,” returned she, “thy asseveration was true; but Alan,” she continued, turning towards him, “we come to set thee free—Fly, my son, fly from the cruelty of thy enemies, and give ease to two hearts who yearn for thy safety.”

“No,”—cried he—“let Montfort use his power—the son of Fitz-Osborne will not disgrace himself by a cowardly escape.”

“Barbarous, and ungrateful!” exclaimed Gertrude;—“thou hast already rejected me—wilt thou give me new pangs by courting thy own destruction?” —“Sweet maid,”—said he, taking her hand, “and art thou interested for Alan?—wouldst thou preserve him?—

Ah!

Ah! rather despise---hate---revile this unfortunate, and leave him to his fate!"

"Can Gertrude do so?" she replied, in a reproachful tone, "has she given thee cause to think her so ungentle?—

Ah! did thy heart"—she paused. "My child," said the Countess, "he loves us not---he despises our counsels."

"Noble lady," replied Alan, "I am grateful for thy counsel---but I cannot follow it, without dishonour and shame."

Cruel!" exclaimed Gertrude, with streaming eyes, "then expect to see me expire at thy feet---yes, I swear to die if thou continuest thy purpose---I swear before Heaven---and I call the listening angels to attest my vow!--if thou dost dread the misjudging censures of the world more than my death, prepare to glut thy sight with a spectacle of horror."

"O spare me the thought!" cried Alan, "I consent---I comply---do with me as thou wilt!"

Gerald,

Gerald, a silent, though disturbed spectator of this scene, now fell at Gertrude's feet, and implored a thousand blessings on her head. She beheld him with a look of kindness, and taking off a bracelet from her arm—"thy master," cried she, "would scorn my gifts, or——"

Alan darted his eye at the bracelet; he snatched it from her hand, "precious gift!" said he, kissing it eagerly, "lie thee next my heart—no other shall possess thee!"

The daughter of Montfort turned to Isabella, "I have conquered!" said she aloud. Then lowering her voice to a whisper, "my mother, he is not indifferent, he almost loves me!"

The Countess shared her satisfaction—"time presses," said she, to the son of Fitz-Osborne, "We must part." She made a sign to the keeper, and he instantly opened the door of the dungeon.

"Guard



“Guard thy life well,” said Gertrude, in a faltering voice, as Alan stepped forward, “remember that another depends on it.” He bowed on her hand, kissed that of the Countess, and they separated.

The keeper attended him and Gerald through the town: he replied to the watch-word of the centinels, and they were suffered to pass without opposition. He then left them, and before morning dawned, they measured many weary paces.

Alan, occupied by conflicting thoughts, wandered on without any fixed direction. Gerald, whose fears converted every bush into a pursuer, ceased not to urge his master to better speed, and at length reminded him of Gertrude’s injunction.

That name operated upon Alan like a talisman, he quickened his steps, and they soon reached the entrance of a forest, where Gerald eagerly proposed to remain till evening should suffer them to pursue their journey with more security.

Alan

Alan consented, they explored the most hidden shades. The son of Fitz-Osborne threw himself at the root of a spreading oak, and pulling the bracelet from his bosom, gave himself up to painful meditation.

Gerald, though insensible to his own wants, felt those of his master. Bread and water had been their only sustenance for two days, and they were now even deprived of that scanty pittance.

The faithful Gerald trod through the forest with cautious steps, anxious to discover whether it contained any wild fruits. His search was successful, he returned with that simple repast to his master, and obliged him to partake of it.

They now consulted on a place of refuge, and Gerald mentioned the castle of Fitz-Osborne—"Though," added he, "thou hast an enemy there—Lord William."

"And

“ And I have also a friend,” interrupted Alan, “ a true friend—my dear Alice ! I will hasten to embrace her—to speak peace to her afflicted soul—to restore to her, her son—not fortunate—yet not unworthy.”

They continued conversing ’till evening cast her grey mantle over the earth. It was the signal for their departure. They arose, and quitting the forest, chose the most unfrequented paths.

In passing along, they overtook an old pilgrim, who seemed to tread with weary feet. Age had silvered his locks, and his furrowed aspect wore the traces of deep affliction.

“ Save thee, venerable sire,” cried Alan, in a kind tone, “ the weight of years is a sufficient burden for thee ; suffer my domestic to bear that scrip, and accept my supporting arm.” He advanced and presented it to him.

“ Courteous youth,” replied the pilgrim, “ Heaven will reward thy charity,  
but



but I take not thy offer, for this situation is alike the effect of my choice and of my crimes."

Alan drew back his hand.

"Mistake not, youth," resumed the pilgrim, "my crimes were partly involuntary, and perhaps the mercy of an all-righteous Being may accept a bitter penance and unceasing tears as some atonement!"

Alan heard him with compassion, and again offered his hand. "No," said the pilgrim, "no, kind youth, I will persevere to the end. But tell me, I pray thee, and let me not seem importunate, tell me thy name; I once was well acquainted with features resembling thine, tell me what happy parents call thee son?"

"Alas!" replied the youth, "my parents have no being; prudence requires concealment, but I cannot doubt that countenance. I am the Son of Alan Fitz-Osborne."

“Blessed God!” cried the stranger, in a voice of emotion, “art thou the offspring of Fitz-Osborne?—of that hero?—yes, thy aspect bears the same noble impression of candour, of valour, and of generosity!—thou hast the same stature too—all—all—declare thee to be indeed his son!”

“Thou knewest my sire then?” said Alan, surprized—“knew him, most sure I did! often, often have we rushed together through the ensanguined field; often have the proud crested squadrons of the enemy trembled beneath our associated swords! yes, I knew him well—my soul was then free from stain or remorse, he was my friend, my companion, my brother!”

“And thy name?” cried Alan.

“Arnulf De Montmorency,” cried the old man, “a name that once commanded honour and respect.”

“But

“ But why dost thou travel thus unintended ? What secret sorrow forces these sighs from thy breast ? Does thy fire yet live, or dost thou mourn his loss ? ”

“ It is a long time since the silent tomb received him,” answered Alan.

“ What, is Fitz-Osborne no more ? ” cried the pilgrim, a tear rolled down his cheek ; he wiped it away, and again turned towards Alan, “ many years have passed,” said he, “ since I deserted the world, and forsook the society of men, yet this moment Fitz-Osborne is present to my thoughts ; thou art his image ; when I look in thy face, I recall his friendship, and I deplore his death ! blame me not, I should congratulate thee on the attainment of his rights, but I cannot.”

Alan pressed his hand, “ I possess not these rights,” said he, “ I am friendless, dependant, and persecuted.”

“ Thy words are a mystery to my ear,” said the old Man, “ yet though I



do not understand them, I will tell thee that the poor cell of Montmorency shall afford a refuge to the son of his friend. I learn that cruel faction has armed my misguided countrymen against each other: two days since, I passed through the field of carnage, in my return from the shrine of St. Thomas; perhaps thou wert of the party of the vanquished?"

"It is true," replied the youth, looking down.

"Shame not at the chance of war," said Montmorency, "but glory that thou hast espoused a just cause, though unsuccessful. We shall reach my cell before the morning breaks, and there thou mayest defy pursuit."

"My master," cried Gerald, "accept the proposal of this venerable person; there is danger in going to the castle of Fitz-Osborne; we are not assured that the Earl will protect thee, and thou hast every thing to dread from the malice of Lord William."

"Who

"Who is this Earl?" demanded the pilgrim.

"Walter Fitz-Osborne," answered Alan.

"Ha! Walter, I knew him; he was the reverse of thy fire. But why dost thou call him Earl? Is not that title due to thee?"

Alan's cheek took a deeper hue: "I will unravel to thee these seeming incongruities," said he, "when we arrive at thy cell, suffer me to be silent till then."

The old man renewed not his enquiries. They pursued their route without speaking, and in a few hours reached the cell.

It was delved into the side of a steep mountain. Moss and ivy intermingled, covered the front, and from the top hung a craggy and pointed rock, which appeared ready to crush those who entered. Just below a dark stream, murmuring amongst some rugged pebbles, by its hoarse and melancholy noise, seemed to

declare this solitary spot, the habitation of despair and woe.

The pilgrim led in his guests, and then bidding them not to be disturbed by his absence, quitted them for a while. In a short time he returned, bending under the weight of a large bundle of fresh rushes. Alan hastened to relieve him from his burden.

“ My son,” cried Montmorency, “ behold thy bed, it is a luxury I allow not to myself: long have these limbs been unused to any better couch than the bare and damp earth. Say, canst thou reconcile thyself to the austerities of my life ?”

“ Ah ! father,” replied Alan, “ my youth can well dispense with those delicacies, which thy feeble age has need of.”

“ The wants of nature are few and simple,” said the pilgrim, “ but man, —capricious man, has multiplied them,

to



to infinity; vainly imagining, that by extending his desires he can encrease his pleasures. Alas! my son, is not their gratification always attended with satiety, with disgust, and often with remorse?"

"See," continued he, opening his scrip, and taking from thence some morsels of brown bread, and a few dry fruits, "these suffice to allay my hunger, and the beveridge of the limpid rill assuages my thirst. What more could the most luxurious viands, and the most costly wines produce?—yes, they might pamper a depraved appetite—despicable consideration! God has formed man in his own image, and shall he erase the likeness by the vile pursuits of sensuality?"

"Pardon me," said the son of Fitz-Osborne, "I hear thee with reverence and respect, but are not thy words too strict? Vicious gratifications should ever

be avoided ; but will not a moderate use of the blessings of life better fulfil the will of the deity, than that rigid and austere severity, which seeking only mortification, seems to despise his gifts, and to consider them as valueless ?”

“ Thus reasons youth,” resumed Montmorency, with a stern air. “ Sanguine in its hopes, boundless in its desires, it contemplates them as laudable, and considers the admonitions of age as sour and absurd.” “ Ah ! father,” interrupted Alan, eagerly, “ far different are my thoughts.—I will revere thy counsels—I will hear thy precepts—I will engrave them on my heart !”

The countenance of Montmorency lost its sternness. He grasped the hand of Alan. “ Thou art ingenious,” cried he, “ thou art sincere—may the commerce of the world not corrupt thy sincerity, nor delude thy imagination !—Alas, my son !—in condemning the pursuits and  
the

the passions of humanity, I condemn myself—thou wilt learn from my story that dear bought experience has given me some right to become the monitor of others. Yet have I this right?" cried he in a tone of anguish, "I, who have been impetuous, unjust? I, who am polluted with blood—who am a murderer, an assassin!"

Alan trembled. The old man perceived his emotions. "I have shocked thee," said he, "I regard myself with horror and detestation; no wonder I should incur thine." He looked up, he beat his breast, he uttered a hollow groan, repeated it, and muttered some incoherent sounds. Then assuming an appearance of more composure—"Youth," said he, "rest thee on these rushes: I go to fulfil my morning penance; follow not my steps, lest an indiscreet curiosity give me cause to be offended with thee."

Alan obeyed, and obliged Gerald to lie beside him. Weariness soon sealed their



eyes in deep slumber, and the old man pursued his purpose.

He returned in an hour; they were not yet awake. "Ah!" cried he, gazing at them, "such is the sleep of innocence; how unlike the restlessness of conscious guilt and remorse!—Dear injured shades," continued he, sinking on his knees, "bleeding victims of rash revenge!—Such once were ye; so innocent, so good, so beautiful. Ah! will ye accept the penitence of your murderer? Will ye sue for his pardon to the throne of offended Omnipotence?"

He arose, and retiring to a corner of the cell, continued plunged in a deep and painful meditation till his guests awoke.

Alan no sooner opened his eyes, than he thought of Gertrude. Not seeing the old man, he fancied himself unobserved, and took the bracelet in his hand. He pressed it to his lips and to his bosom  
alter-

alternately. "Sweet pledge of unmerited affection," murmured he in a tender voice, "never shall Alan behold thee without renewed gratitude and regret."

Montmorency approached him unperceived. "Thou lovest," said he, "blush not; love in itself is laudable, and contemptible is that heart which cannot feel its soft sensations. But, O my son, avoid black suspicion, avoid dire jealousy, they were the cause of my crimes, they are the cause of my penitence and my despair!"

Alan sighed. "Beware of jealousy," repeated the old man.

"Thou mistakest the motive of my agitation," said the son of Fitz-Osborne, "far from entertaining jealousy, I know not even if I love."

"Thou raisest my curiosity," said Montmorency, "and if it will not pain thee, I call for the execution of that promise thou madest me last night."

"I am

“I am prepared to obey thee,” answered Alan. “First,” interrupted the old man, “we will partake of what homely fare my cell affords.”

In saying thus, he placed the contents of the scrip before his guests, and encouraged them to eat. Hunger converts the most unsavoury viands into dainties. Gerald fed with avidity on the brown bread; he declared it to be superior to the most delicate repast of luxury.

Alan smiled, and turning to Montmorency—“the words of my domestic,” said he, “confirm thine—that the real wants of nature are few and quickly satisfied.”

The old man replied by a look of approbation, and after removing the fragments of their meal, desired Alan to begin his recital.

The youth bowed his head and obeyed. He commenced with the incident of the contract and the stigma which had been cast upon his birth.

Ment-



Montmorency started, "Now by heaven and all things sacred," interrupted he, "Walter and Maurice are both lying miscreants!—The noble soul of thy sire never harboured a thought of dishonour or of fraud—its only weakness was too great a confidence in this brother, whom I knew to be base, and whom I presage is a traitor!—But proceed youth."

Alan resumed his narration. He mentioned the seeming partiality of the usurper during his infancy, and the care he had taken of his education. He enlarged on the affection of Alice—he was lavish in the praises of that faithful creature. He then slightly mentioned his quarrel with Lord William.

Gerald eagerly interrupted him at this part. He would himself relate the fray, and celebrate the early heroism of his master. Montmorency was affected by his zeal—he pressed his hand, and regarded Alan with looks of admiration.

That

That youth continued his tale. He described the usurper's horrors, and recited the exclamation of his nurse. The old man shuddered. He went on and finished his story without further interruption.

“Noble youth!” said Montmorency, embracing him as he concluded, “noble son of Fitz-Osborne! I perceive thy modest tongue has slightly glanced over those actions which are most worthy of praise; but they will be known and rewarded—Heaven will one day restore to thee the rights, of which treachery has deprived thee.—Yes, my son, base treachery!—A dreadful mystery shadows the fate of thy mother, but it shall be developed, and the vicious shall be ensnared in their own toils. Meantime, let not thy fortitude or thy virtue forsake thee—trust in the protection of the All powerful, and be mindful of his behests.”

“May

“ May I observe thy council,” said Alan with a look of acknowledgment. “ But father, should I not relieve the fears of my beloved Alice—perhaps this moment her heart is torn with affliction perhaps her tears flow for my fancied death—ah! I will go to the castle of Fitz-Osborne—I will fly to my dear Alice.”

“ No,” returned Montmorency, “ thou shalt not trust to the usurper—I will array thy domestic in my pilgrim weeds—he shall go to thy Alice—he shall satisfy her of thy safety, and bring thee intelligence how matters stand.

Gerald caught at the idea—he would depart that instant. Montmorency applauded his fidelity, but Alan insisted he should devote that day to rest, and not commence his journey until the ensuing morn.

Gerald murmured but obeyed. The venerable Montmorency now seemed beguiled of his sorrow by the interest he took



took in what concerned the son of his friend. He obliged him to repeat again all the material occurrences of his life. He wondered afresh at the recital, and renewed his counsels of resignation.

Early next morn Gerald prepared for his expedition. When he had put on the disguise, Montmorency bid him take no care for sustenance, as his habit would procure him sufficient from the charity of well disposed persons. Gerald had not thought of it; he kissed his master's hand, and departed with a quick and chearful pace.

When he was gone, Montmorency left Alan for some time to perform his usual duty. The gloom of his countenance on returning pierced the heart of that youth, and encreased his desire to be acquainted with the particulars of a life, which he had strong cause to believe eventful.

Montmorency guessed his thoughts, and resolved to gratify his curiosity.

“ Young

"Young friend," said he, "I see concern in thy features—my grief shocks thee, and my austerities surprize thee. I will prove to thee that both are just. Sit thee here beside me and I will relate a tale which will harrow up thy soul as thou art compassionate, and inspire thee with horror as thou art virtuous."

"Perhaps," said Alan in a tone of pity, "perhaps it will renew thy anguish."

"Alas!" interrupted the old man, "it is always present—silence cannot extenuate it." Alan now seated himself on the ground and Montmorency began.





## BOOK THE FOURTH.

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### The STORY of MONTMORENCY.

“**S**PRUNG from a noble and illustrious lineage,” said he, “the sentiments of honour seemed congenial to my birth, and I possessed them. But too early left to my own guidance, they were not chastened by moderation, or tempered by discretion. I lost both my parents in the years of childhood, and a distant kinsman took charge of my education. At the age of twenty, I became my own master, by his death.”

This

This guardian, who had been himself renowned in arms, took care to instill into the young heart of his pupil an ardent love of glory, and a contempt of danger : but his lessons reached no further ; he sought not to eradicate from my breast the seeds of pride and revenge, but encouraged the first as laudable, and the last as just. No sooner was I freed from all restraint by his decease, than I quitted the mansion of my ancestors for the court, where I expected to meet a reception suitable to my birth.

Nor was I mistaken. Henry treated me with observance and respect, and admitted me as the companion of his pleasures. Intoxicated by favour, and full of my own importance, I rejected the counsels of my friends with disdain, and plunging into all manner of dissoluteness and extravagance, soon wasted my patrimony, and impaired my health.

Thy noble fire awoke me from the lethargy of vice. He first acquired my esteem,

esteem, and then attained my confidence. He painted to me in true colours the folly of my conduct, he changed my heart, he reformed my manners; I was no longer the same Montmorency.

Following his advice, I discarded the shameless croud of parasites who had preyed upon my fortunes. I again visited my long forsaken mansion. I relieved the wants of my needy vassals; I spread peace and happiness throughout my domains

Some differences at that time arose, between the King of Scotland and Henry. Our monarch thought himself injured, and dispatched a body of forces to invade the territories of his neighbour.

I recollected the lesson of my kinsman; I joined these forces, and Fitz-Osborne was again my companion. The Scotch levied an army to oppose us. We hastened to meet them, and an obstinate engagement ensued. Night coming on,  
each



each party concluded itself victorious; we however maintained the field. Next morn saluted us with a spectacle of horror. Eager to give burial to the bodies of our friends, we demanded and obtained a truce, of which our enemies were equally desirous with ourselves.

As Fitz-Osborne and I passed through the field, our ears were suddenly assailed by wailings of affliction in a female voice. We turned our heads, and beheld two women bending over a bleeding corse.— We advanced towards them. She who seemed most afflicted, raised her face for a moment. With what new emotions did that transient glance affect my soul! I gazed—I panted—I continued immoveable.

Fitz-Osborne approached them. He addressed her whom I have mentioned. “Lady,” said he, in a respectful tone, “this scene of carnage ill accords with the softness of thy sex. Avoid it—shock not thy sight with objects so afflicting.”

“Ah!”

“Ah!” returned she, wildly, “hadst thou a brother? Dost thou mourn him dead?” “O, Malcolm, dear Malcolm,” continued she, sinking on the corse—“they would have me quit thee—they have taken thy life, and they would have me desert thee!”

My torpor vanished at these sounds. I advanced, and, unknowing what I did, threw myself beside her.

She regarded me with a look of surprise—“Dost thou lament my brother,” demanded she. “Gentle Lady,” said I, taking her hand, “I lament thy Malcolm, because thou lamentest him.”

Ah!” cried she, shrieking, “perhaps thou wert his murderer—perhaps thy sword pierced his bosom. Begone, barbarian! insult not my griefs.” At that moment some Scottish soldiers approached. On seeing the corse, they set forth loud cries. “Our generous lord, the brave Malcolm!” exclaimed they, with one voice.

They

They stooped, took up the body, and placed it on their bucklers. The lady covered her face, and, leaning on the woman who attended her, followed them in silent sorrow.

Impelled by a new born and violent passion, I rushed after the soldiers—"Tell me," cried I, "in pity tell me who is this beauteous maiden?"

"Sister to him, whose breathless corse we bear—the chief of Glencairn." "And her name?" "Amana."

They hastened on, and I returned to Fitz-Osborne. He penetrated my soul. I sought not to conceal its emotions. He poured the balm of friendship into my wound. He soothed—he inspired me with hope. I welcomed it with transport; indulged its flatteries, and was happy.

The truce ended both sides engaged again. We were victorious in several encounters. We put the enemy to flight,  
and



and ravaged the surrounding lands. Yet my heart revolted at the employment. It was the country of Amana. I fancied her present. I fancied her enquiring—  
“if these were the fruits of my love?”

The idea unnerved my arm. I wished ardently for peace. Fortune seemed propitious to that wish. The Scottish king, alarmed by our depredations and success, dispatched commissioners to Henry, in order to implore a cessation, and negotiate a treaty. We were recalled, our monarch satisfied, and our soldiers enriched with plunder.

I alone was discontented. Relieved from one anxiety my heart now became a prey to a thousand new ones. How should I see Amana?—how inform her of my passion? Or were that possible, would she return it—would she hear the tale with sympathy—might not her affections be engaged already beyond recall? Or might she not regard in me the enemy of her country, not the slave of her charms?

Such were my reflections, and such my fears : I communicated them to Fitz-Osborne. Insensible himself to the pains or pleasures of love, he could not conceive my apprehensions; he considered them as absurd. But they had taken too deep a root to be overcome by reasoning or ridicule. He therefore took another method; counselled me to go to Scotland, to seek out Amana, and to offer her my hand.

“ Alas !” returned I, “ will not such conduct be presumption ? What title have I to her favour ? I have not merited it by my services. Shall I say to her—  
“ Behold the spoiler of thy native land. Behold him who has embrued his hands in the blood of thy countrymen ; reward him with thy love. No, dear friend, dear Fitz-Osborne, I am fated to unhappiness—to despair ; I cannot counteract my destiny ; I cannot abate its vigour !”

Thy

Thy fire interrupted me with a smile—  
“Hear the voice of reason,” said he,  
“and cease to torment thyself with fancied ills. If the soul of Amana is just and noble, she will rather applaud thy valour, than resent thy hostilities. If she thinks not thus, she is unworthy to be the wife of Montmorency. Try her by this test:—If she is kind, be happy; if unkind, forget her. Let not thy spirit be depressed by the caprice of a woman. Let me again know my friend.”

I sighed—“Fitz-Osborne, thou lovest not! Forget her—Can I do so? Ah! that counsel was dictated by an unfeeling heart!”

“Not an unfeeling, but a free and a friendly one,” replied thy fire; “reflect a little—thou wilt know it better.”

I pressed his hand——“Forgive me, Fitz-Osborne; forgive my petulance, and despise me not.”

He returned the pressure—it was enough—I was at ease. He renewed his



counsel, and I resolved to follow it; but it was necessary I should first visit my own habitation, and a young and only sister, who received her education in a neighbouring monastery.

Emma (so was she called) beheld me with transport. I contemplated her opening beauties with a fraternal delight; yet my hand—my cruel hand——

Montmorency paused—he raised his eyes; he sunk them again on the ground. A groan of agony burst from his lips; he could not proceed. His emotions affected Alan with pity, and a horror of he knew not what. He continued silent however, and the old man at length resumed his narration. “After embracing this fair blossom,” said he, “and commending her to the care of the holy sisterhood, I pursued my way to Scotland.”

I gained the capital, and used every means to get intelligence of her who had  
enslaved

enslaved my heart. My inquiries were answered with success; I was told she resided in the castle of her brother, which with his possessions had fallen to her by his death; that she had rejected the vows of a numerous croud of suitors, who paid homage to her charms, and lived in a total seclusion from all society, save her domestics and her vassals.

This information at once gave me hope and fear. While I was pleased with her reserve, I dreaded her insensibility. "Alas!" said I to myself, "may not Montmorency add one more to the list of the rejected."

This apprehension, however, prevented me not from trying my fortune. I be-thought me of a stratagem to gain admittance to her presence, and lost no time in the execution. The castle of Glencairn was well known, I obtained a direction to it, and set off with a beating heart, attended by five trusty domestics.

On descrying the stately turrets, I felt new emotion. Now was the time for my stratagem. I contrived to fall off my horse, and alarmed my domestics by feigned complaints of pain; I declared myself unable to mount again—they were perplexed—they knew not what to do; I redoubled my complaints, and encreased their anxiety.

At length some peasants appeared; my servants demanded whether I could get an asylum in the castle.

“We know not,” they replied, “our mistress sees no strangers—but she is charitable and generous—we will try.” They hastened to the castle, and returned in a short time with some of Amana’s domestics. “Our Lady,” said they, “will fulfil the laws of hospitality; she has commanded us to bear thee to her mansion.”

The joy of my soul was so excessive at these words, that I had nearly betrayed myself;



myself, but sensible that all depended on that discovery, I restrained my agitation, and, continuing my artifice, pretended to arise with difficulty and uneasiness.

I was borne to the castle, and conveyed to a magnificent apartment, where my compassionate attendants laid me on a couch, and prepared to administer remedies for an ill that did not exist.

But I had soon no longer need to feign disease. My transports—the joyful agitation of my spirits, were too much for my health; a fever seized me, which continued some days, during that time I had every assistance which kindness and pity could procure—But I required more—I required to see Amana herself, and that was impossible.

The fever quitted me, I recovered my strength, but still pretended imbecillity.

One day I ventured to hint my wishes to a woman whom Amana had sent to inquire of my health: “I am better,” said

I, “but I cannot be at ease while my gratitude is restrained—while I am prevented from pouring out its effusions at her feet who has inspired it.”

The woman retired—she came back shortly, “I have told thy desire to my mistress,” said she, “Amana consents to see thee.”

“O Heaven!” cried I, transported, “she consents!” I paused—I recollected myself—I composed my countenance; I thanked this messenger in a calm tone, and bade her conduct me to the presence of her lady; she led me to a spacious saloon, where sat the lovely Amana clad in a mourning habit.

Her posture was pensive, and her looks were melancholy, she seemed buried in thought and observed not my entrance. But that posture—that melancholy—that pensiveness, teemed with a thousand graces, I was lost in admiration—I hardly breathed; at length—“It is she!” cried I in a tone of rapture.

Amana

Amana started ! she saw me, and I fell at her feet.

“ Charitable lady,” cried I. “ accept the acknowledgments of him thou hast preserved—he devotes to thee a life, which he owes solely to thy care, and he beseeches thee to command his services.”

“ Stranger,” replied Amana, “ I am informed of thy quality—thou art noble, and gratitude finds most room in noble hearts. But thou art mistaken—to Heaven, not to me, these thanks are due ; I have only practised the common duties of humanity, and thou owest me no acknowledgments. But a sudden recollection strikes me ; I am not unacquainted with thy features ; I have seen thee before—where I know not : I pray thee to assist my memory.”

“ Beauteous lady,” cried I, “ and dost thou recall the image of Montmorency ?—O happiness !—thine, lady, has

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never



never quitted my bosom : it has continued there since the first day that gave thee to my enraptured eyes. A day, fatal and bloody---yet one which in shewing to me thee, was the first and most important of my life, for then---then only did I begin to exist."

I had taken her hand, she drew it away with an air of offended modesty ; " Thy situation," said she in a reserved tone, " precludes resentment ; but I would have thee learn the observance due to my sex and rank." She arose, and would have quitted me.

I caught her robe : " stay, Lady," cried I, " this unfortunate shall no more offend thee. He will conceal the workings of his soul---he will bear far from thee his sighs and his complaints. Adorable Lady ! afflict him not with thy anger---kill him not with thy disdain !"

She stopped ; she regarded me with a milder air : " Prove the sincerity of thy words,"

words," said she, " by thy deportment. Force me not to commit a breach of the laws of hospitality, or to regret I have observed them."

" Kind Lady!" exclaimed I, " beautiful Lady!—yes, I will obey thee—I will be mindful of thy caution—I will impose a restraint upon my rebellious tongue—though my heart burst in the conflict—I will not speak—it is better that I expire, than that I incur thy resentment."

She again assumed an air of severity. I was sensible of my error, and by submissive looks strove to deprecate her anger. I obtained her pardon: we entered into conversation, and I became still more and more enamoured.

She spoke of her brother with tears. I could not behold her weep without fresh agitation. But I constrained it—I mourned with her the loss of Malcolm. She was pleased, consoled, and beheld me  
with

with more complacency, though not with less reserve. We separated not 'till night, when I entered my chamber, my bosom panted with love and hope: I threw myself on my couch, yet thought not of repose. I was too happy. In fine, many more days passed on, in delightful converse with her whom my soul adored.

I could no longer affect indisposition; nor did I even think of affecting it. Joy had banished dissimulation; pleasure spoke in my countenance, and revelled in my heart.

The grief of Amana too became less violent. Her reserve disappeared insensibly, and she seemed to forget my indiscretion. Yet ever observant of modesty and decorum, her women were always present at our interviews, and auditors of our conversations.

One evening I took up a lute which lay in the saloon. Amana inquired if I was skilled in music. I bowed, touched  
the



the lute, and accompanied it with my voice. I chose a tender and melancholy air. Amana trembled; a tear stole down her cheek, and she uttered the name of Malcolm.

The sweetness and the woe of her accents struck me sensibly. I changed to a more lively measure, and breathed the most impassioned sounds. I spoke of love, its hopes, its apprehensions, its delights. I painted the torments of a despairing lover: the notes became more melancholy. I looked at Amana, she blushed and averted her eyes.

No longer master of myself, I cast away the lute. I flew towards her. I pressed her hand, I devoured it with kisses. She recovered from her confusion, and frowning, asked, if thus I kept my promise. Then with a mingled air of haughtiness and modesty, quitted the saloon before I had power to prevent her.

What

What were now my sensations ! The pangs I had just described, were all my own. I cursed my precipitation ; I accused her of cruelty ; and in a moment after retracted the charge. "No," cried I, "I have nothing to blame but my own blind impetuosity—my presumption—fatal impetuosity !—fatal presumption !—ye are justly repaid with the hatred of Amana !—with her detestation—her contempt !"

"But why youth—why should I attempt to describe to thee my agonies ? Thy heart, alive only to gratitude and compassion, feels not love. To thee my transports will seem unreasonable and tiresome."

"No father," answered Alan, "true, if this be love, I feel it not. But I hear thee with pleasure, and am interested in thy sensations."

The old man proceeded.

"I continued my exclamations, and repeated my complaint." That woman  
who

who had procured me admission to Amana's presence was moved with pity at my situation. She approached me——  
“Noble Montmorency,” cried she, “encourage not despair. Believe a friend who assures thee, that the severity of Amana springs only from the modesty natural to her sex, and not from the dictates of hatred.”

“Ah!” cried I, “Abuse me not with thy flatteries. I have been rash—insolent—impudent—I deserve her hate, and should I not meet it?”

“And yet thou dost not,” said she, smiling, “were I allowed to reveal the secrets of my mistress, I might tell thee more.” I grasped her hand, “What couldst thou tell me?” said I eagerly. She smiled again. “Ah! cried I, “inspire me not with delusive hopes, can Amana—O no—she cannot love Montmorency!”

“And yet Montmorency deserves to be loved,” replied this woman, “he is  
young,



young, illustrious, noble and brave. Why shouldst thou say she cannot love him?"

"Ah! flatterer," said I, trying to restrain my rising joy, "grant that thy words are true—grant that she did love me? Does she so still? Has not my presumption."——

"It was wrong," answered she, "but do not therefore despair—we will unite our forces—we will dispose her to forgiveness by submission and prudence." "My preserver!" exclaimed I, putting a ring of value on her finger. "No," said she, drawing it off, "my heart is not mercenary, pardon me, noble Montmorency, I cannot accept thy gift."

I implored, I entreated her acceptance of the ring, and at length prevailed.——

"Well," cried she, gaily in going from me, "we will soften this haughty Amana. We will subdue her reserve." But I tire thee youth with this minuteness."

"Father,"

“Father,” answered Alan, “far from being fatigued, I hear thee with attention and delight. Proceed, I beseech thee: thy words are grateful to mine ear, as the evening dew to the thirsty floweret.”

“While I waited for the performance of this woman’s promise,” continued the old man, “numerous and conflicting ideas possessed my soul. If Amana loves me,” whispered I to myself, “gracious Heaven, if Amana loves me!” I stopped.

“Wretched Montmorency,” resumed I, “delude not thy imagination with vain hopes. Does love wear the form of hate? Does it wear frowns, disdain, aversion? Ah no!—yet Amana frowned—her eyes beamed killing scorn. Alas! she loves me not!—yet perhaps maidenly reserve and modesty obliged her to assume that appearance. Good God! were that possible!”

Thus, by turns, a prey to exquisite joy and cold despair, I wasted the hours  
till

till I beheld my confidant again. She entered—I flew towards her—I caught her hand—I looked in her face with an air of anxiety, but could not speak.

“Let Montmorency hope,” cried she, smiling.

The words, the smile, filled my breast with unutterable transport. “Yes, he will hope!” exclaimed I, “he will welcome the truant to his bosom, it shall never more desert him! But say, declare, does Amana, does she pity, does she love Montmorency? O repeat her expressions—give to my delighted ear the rapturous sound!—Thou art my good angel—I will worship thee.”

“Thy adoration is misplaced,” answered she with a smile, “hadst thou not had a more powerful pleader with Amana; my solicitations were useless.”

“Ah! speak—tell me—who was this generous advocate?”

“Even her own heart.”

“Good



“ Good Heaven !—Is such happiness reserved for Montmorency ?”

“ Yes, returned my confidant, “ but there are some conditions which thou must first fulfil. I spoke to Amana—I represented to her thy situation and thy torments—she heard me with downcast looks and blushes. I augured good success from these appearances. I pursued my work, and at length forced her to confess that thou wert most dear to her heart. Interrupt me not,” continued she, seeing me about to speak, “ hear out my recital. What wouldest thou have me to do ?” said Amana, (in return to my importunities) thou hast wrested my secret from me, but thinkest thou I am so shameless, so lost to discretion and to pride, as to say to Montmorency—I love thee. No, Catherine—I know better what is due to the dignity of my birth and the honour of my sex. I have yet preserved both from the charge of  
lightness

and the rude breath of slander—let me still do so—let me not give my discarded suitors a pretext to accuse me. Would they not exclaim with justice—is this the relentless, the cold Amana?—she who rejected our vows—who was deaf to our complaint? Yet she, who on the knowledge of a few days, gives up her insensibility, her prudence—entertains an ardent passion for a stranger, and confesses her love unrestrained by modesty and shame? So would they say—and shall I incur such reproaches?—No Catherine—let Montmorency first deserve before he wins me—let me be assured of his constancy before I loose my own freedom. One year I exact for the trial of his faith; if he is worthy of my favor he will not repine at the test I put him to. He must quit my castle now, and enter not again within its walls till the time of his probation is accomplished. When he returns, the hand and the affection

tion of Amana shall be wholly his." Catherine ceased to speak at these words.

"O promise of delight and felicity!" exclaimed I, "Montmorency will not repine at the length of the race while the goal is in view. He will approve his faith and his constancy unblemished, by the strictness of his obedience. But say, kind confederate, can I not see the arbitress of my destiny once more?—think of the pains of absence—let me alleviate them by recalling her last glances—her last words. Good Catherine, wilt thou not obtain for me this poor request?"

"We have but to try," answered she, passing out. With difficulty did I oblige myself not to follow her; but the dread of Amana's displeasure, a dread worse than death, reigned in my steps.

I was shortly summoned to the presence of her whom my soul valued above health or life. What were my emotions? I cast myself at her feet in a delirium of  
pleasure



pleasure—I uttered a thousand extravagancies, while her sweetly blushing cheek and averted eye added to my raptures. Ah! that moment—could I then think—but hold my bursting heart—thou art not yet sufficiently agonized—thou hast not yet atoned.” Montmorency paused again, he uttered a groan of anguish and resumed his narration.

“Sovereign of my affections and of my thoughts,” said I, (when I had regained some degree of composure,) “behold me ready to obey thy behests—see by the promptness of my obedience thy power over Montmorency. He murmurs not at thy rigour, but he blesses thy condescension.”

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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